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PORT ROYAL

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1886

PORT ROYAL

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE

HISTORY OF RELIGION AND LITERATURE IN FRANCE

BY

CHARLES BEARD, B.A.

"Pour moi, je suis de l'ordre de tous les Saints, et tous les Saints sont de mon ordre."
Angélique Arnauld

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BOOK III.

PORT ROYAL IN ITS RELATION TO LITERATURE AND SOCIETY.

I.

BLAISE AND JACQUELINE PASCAL.

The name which Port Royal most confidently offers to the admiration of the world is indisputably that of Blaise Pascal. The glory of Racine was gained in an arena to which Port Royal would willingly have barred his entrance. St. Cyran, Singlin, Nicole, even Arnauld, are so completely identified with a peculiar church party, and an unpopular theology, as to be known only to students of ecclesiastical history. They belong to Catholicism and Port Royal; Pascal to religion and the world. His brilliant achievements in mathematical and physical science have given him a high place among discoverers: his "Provincial Letters" mark an epoch of the French language, and are still a model of style: his "Thoughts" are a contribution to Christian evidence, much pondered by other than Jansenist theologians. And yet he is Port Royalist at every point, and a critic ignorant of Port Royal must fail to understand him. His glory is reflected upon the community; and it, in return, has to answer more than one heavy accusation, brought by his modern admirers. The mathematicians complain that powers, which promised to add much to the positive knowledge of mankind, were wasted in the dreams of a gloomy and suicidal austerity; the students of literature, that a garbled copy of the "Thoughts" was deliberately suffered to misrepresent to posterity the mind of the master. Before long we shall have to inquire whether it

is possible to give a full answer to these charges: now it is sufficient to reply, that the world owes the "Provincial Letters" to the danger, the "Thoughts" to the deliverance of Port Royal; and that every religious thought which Pascal has left, is intertwined with the theology which St. Cyran imposed upon the community.

The time has only now arrived, at which the life of Pascal could be written. Men have long had in their hands the simple and touching biography which his elder sister, Madame Périer, wrote soon after his death, but which was not published till 1684. Even then, however, all that related to Pascal's share in the debate of the Formulary was carefully suppressed, as likely to aggravate the persecution already recommenced against Port Royal.* These omissions were partly repaired in a memoir, entitled "Mémoire sur la Vie de M. Paschal, contenant aussi quelques particularités de celle de ses parens,"—contained in the "Recueil de plusieurs Pièces pour servir à l'Histoire de Port Royal," published at Utrecht in 1740. This memoir was founded upon papers left behind her by Marguerite Périer, the subject of the famous miracle, who, surviving her cure by nearly eighty years, was the last depositary of the traditions of the palmy days of Port Royal. At this point research into the life of Pascal stood still for a century. The "Thoughts" were reprinted again and again; now annotated by Voltaire, now by Condorcet: and scattered sayings or fragments of Pascal's composition were added one by one. A complete edition of all his works was published in 1779, and reprinted in 1819. It was reserved for our own generation to discover that the current copies of the "Thoughts" differed widely from the still extant manuscript, and that the world had mistaken for the genuine

* Havet, Pensées, Notes sur la Vie de Pascal, p. 1. Recueil d'Utrecht, p. 350.

utterance of Pascal, the emasculated work of his editors. M. Victor Cousin has the merit of the discovery, but other labourers have eagerly pressed in at the gate which he opened. M. Prosper Faugère, M. Ernest Havet, and M. Louandre have all published genuine editions of the "Thoughts," each arranged after a fashion of its own. At the same time, the new interest thus awakened in Pascal's works has not failed to embrace also his life. The manuscript stores of the Imperial and of many private Jansenist libraries have been ransacked. Every word that could possibly throw any light upon the history of the Pascal family has been emulously printed by M. Cousin and M. Faugère. The papers of Marguerite Périer, upon which the memoir of 1740 was founded, are edited by each; and each has devoted a volume to the letters, the poems, the character of Jacqueline Pascal, the subprioress of Port Royal. Voltaire held Pascal up to ridicule as a fanatic; M. Cousin has discovered that he was a sceptic; and the Abbé Maynard, who has since published a refutation of the "Provincial Letters," employs two goodly volumes in proving that Pascal was neither fanatic nor sceptic, but a devout son of the Church. Protestant critics have not abstained from the fray; and M. Vinet has left behind him a volume of eloquent essays, one object of which seems to be to show that at heart Pascal was hardly a Catholic at all. Now, for the first time, all the necessary materials are at the command of the biographer; and the critic who goes astray in estimating Pascal's philosophical position, will at least not wander for lack of guidance.

The Pascal, like the Arnauld family, belonged to Auvergne, and although it boasted a patent of nobility, conferred by Louis XI., was of parliamentary rather than of noble condition. Étienne, the father of Blaise Pascal, was the son of Martin Pascal, treasurer of France, and of Marguerite, daughter of M. Pascal de Mons, seneschal of

Clermont. He was educated for the legal profession, and had become second president of the Court of Aids at Clermont, when he married, in 1618, Antoinette Begon. By her he had three children, who survived to man's estate; Gilberte, born in 1620; Blaise, in 1623; and Jacqueline, in 1625. The eldest daughter married, in 1641, her cousin Florin Périer; and was mother of Étienne, Louis, Blaise, Marguerite and Jacqueline Périer, all of whom maintained a close connection with the second generation of Port Royal.*

Blaise Pascal was born at Clermont, on the 19th of June, 1623; his sister Jacqueline on the 4th of October, 1625. In the following year their mother died; and the father, a man of considerable scientific acquirement and a serious turn of mind, began to deliberate upon the propriety of entirely devoting himself to the education of his son, who showed signs of ability beyond his years. Accordingly, in 1631, he sold his office at Clermont to his brother, and removed with his family to Paris, where he invested the greater part of his property in bonds upon the Hôtel de Ville. His house became the resort of the first mathematicians of the day, Mersenne, Le Pailleur, Roberval, Carcavi; and the little society, thus drawn together, was the nucleus of the French Academy of Sciences, first incorporated in 1666.

Étienne Pascal was proud of his children, especially of his son; and would entrust their education to no less careful hands than his own. He would keep them, he said, "above their work," and so did not teach Blaise Latin till he was twelve years old. But in the meantime the child's mind was being conducted through a kind of gymnastic training; he acquired general notions of grammar, and of the relations of languages to each other, and was encouraged

* Marg. Périer, ap. Faugère, Jacq. Pascal, p. 418.

to observe and investigate natural phenomena. While still a child, says his sister, his attention was drawn to the sound produced by striking a porcelain plate with a knife, and to the fact of its cessation as soon as the plate was touched by the hand. From this he proceeded to make other acoustic observations, the result of which was a little treatise on sound, written when he was only twelve years old, yet not deficient in power of reasoning or accuracy of statement.

The story of Pascal's early proficiency in mathematical knowledge is well known. His father, perhaps perceiving the bent of the boy's powers, refused to give him any mathematical instruction, that he might not be prevented by it from making due progress in the study of languages. Again and again Blaise vainly begged for lessons in geometry; he was told that he should be taught as the reward of success in Latin and Greek. The mathematical books, which no doubt abounded in Étienne Pascal's house, were locked up; and when the mathematical friends came, the child was sent out of the way. But I will continue in Madame Périer's own words: —

"My brother, seeing this resistance, asked him one day what this science was, and what it treated of; my father told him, in general terms, that it was the way to make correct figures, and to find the proportions which they bear to each other, and at the same time forbade him to speak of it again, or to think of it any more. But his mind could not remain within these limits, after it had had these simple means of escape,— that mathematics, namely, is the way to make figures infallibly correct: he began to meditate upon it in his play hours; and, being alone in a room where he was accustomed to amuse himself, took a piece of charcoal and drew figures upon the boards, trying how to make, for example, a circle which should be perfectly round, a triangle whose sides and angles should be equal, and other

such things. All this he discovered by himself, and afterwards investigated the relative properties of figures. But as my father's care to hide all these things from him had been so great, he did not know even their names. He was obliged to make definitions for himself: he called a circle a round, a line a bar, and so on with the rest. After these definitions he made axioms, and, at last, perfect demonstrations; and, as in these matters one thing follows upon another, he pushed his researches so far, that he came to Proposition XXXII. of the First Book of Euclid. As he was engaged upon this, my father came into the room where he was, without my brother's hearing him, and found him so engrossed that it was long before he perceived his approach. It is impossible to say which was the more surprised; the son to see his father, on account of the express prohibition which he had given, or the father to see his son in the midst of all these things. But the wonder of the father was much greater when, having asked him what he was doing, he replied that he was trying to find out the theorem which forms Proposition XXXII. of the First Book of Euclid. My father asked him what had made him think of investigating that; he said, that it was because he had found out such another thing; upon which, the same question being repeated, he told him other demonstrations which he had made; and, finally, still going backwards, and always explaining himself by help of his terms 'round' and 'bar,' he came to his definitions and his axioms.

"My father was so amazed at the grandeur and power of this genius, that he left him without saying a word; and went to the house of M. Le Pailleur, who was his intimate friend, and also very learned. When he arrived there he stood motionless, like a man out of his mind. M. Le Pailleur, seeing this, and noticing that he was shedding tears, was shocked, and begged him not to delay the communication of the cause of his trouble. My father answered,

'I do not weep for sorrow, but for joy. You know the pains I have taken to keep my son from any knowledge of geometry, lest it should divert him from his other studies; nevertheless, see what he has done!' Upon that, he showed him all that he had discovered; how, so to speak, the child had invented mathematics. M. Le Pailleur was not less surprised than my father had been, and told him that he did not think it right to keep such a mind captive any longer, or to hide this knowledge from it, and that, without holding him back any more, he must let him see books." *

Acting on this advice, Étienne Pascal gave his son Euclid's "Elements," as a book for his hours of recreation; still exacting from him an exclusive devotion of his hours of study to other pursuits. He soon read them through, and understood them without explanation. Before long he became fit, by help, we are to suppose, of other mathematical books, to take his place in the little society of which his father was a member; and no one, we are told, was more fertile than he in the production of new problems, or more ingenious in the criticism of those offered by others. At the age of sixteen he composed a treatise on conic sections, which, though not printed, was pronounced by competent judges to deserve that honour. Des Cartes, to whom a copy was sent, paid it the compliment of disbelieving that it could possibly be the production of its alleged author.†

Meanwhile, the little Jacqueline, two years younger than her brother, was displaying signs of almost equal precocity. Sisterly partiality paints her childhood in the brightest colours; she was beautiful, sprightly, sweet-tempered, a universal plaything and favourite. At seven years old she began to learn to read. For a time the work went on

* Mad. Périer, ap. Faugère, J. P. p. 5.

† Baillet, Vie de Des Cartes, lib. v. ch. v. p. 39, quoted by Maynard, vol. i. p. 169.

slowly; her attention could not be held down to the dull lesson, till, one day hearing her sister read poetry, she cried, 'If you want to teach me to read, make me read in some book of verse; I will say my lessons as often as you please.' Henceforward all her talk was of verse; she committed many poems to memory, and at eight years old began to write poetry of her own. At eleven, she is said, with the help of two companions, daughters of M. Saintôt, treasurer of France, to have composed a regular comedy in five acts, duly divided into scenes, and conformed to the dramatic rules of the day. The play was twice represented by the young authors and their friends, in presence of a large audience, and furnished matter of conversation to the fashionable circles of Paris.

The pregnancy of Anne of Austria in 1638 afforded Jacqueline Pascal the opportunity for one of those frigid conceits, which, by a great stretch of French courtesy, are called epigrams. "The invincible child of an invincible father" had moved in his mother's womb, and therefore "is already more powerful than the God of War. For before his eyes have ever seen the firmament, his slightest motion is an earthquake to the enemies of France." This, with a sonnet on the same subject, was thought sufficient to warrant the presentation of the young poetess to the Queen. She was taken to St. Germains by Madame de Morangis, a friend of the Pascal family, and introduced into the royal ante-room, where Mademoiselle, Madame de Hautefort, and other ladies were waiting for the Queen, who was busy in the adjoining boudoir. The gay circle crowded round the child; read and praised her rhymes. "If you are so clever at making verses," said Mademoiselle, "make some for me." The little one retired soberly into a corner and soon produced the required stanza. Madame de Hautefort had laid the same command upon her, with the same result, when the Queen sent for Jacqueline and her

guide. The royal incredulity as to the verses which had formed the pretext for the visit was removed by the production of the two impromptu stanzas, and for the day the child was the plaything of the court. Her sister relates, with not unnatural pride, that at the Queen's private repast Jacqueline shared with Mademoiselle the honour of attending to the royal wants. The verses of this memorable day were printed in 1638 under the title of "Vers de la petite Pascal," and dedicated to Anne of Austria in a prose letter written by Jacqueline herself. How strange the contrast between this brief sunshine of court favour, and the heart so soon broken by the troubles of Port Royal!*

About the same time Étienne Pascal was unlucky enough to incur the displeasure of the all-powerful Cardinal. He had invested the savings of his life in bonds upon the Hôtel de Ville at Paris; and the government had arbitrarily curtailed the interest, and so lessened the value of the property. Étienne Pascal encountered one day some of his fellow-sufferers at the house of the Chancellor Seguier; hard words were uttered, as often by men who compare their wrongs; and Gilberte Pascal hints that words were not unaccompanied by acts of violence. The Cardinal dealt summarily—as was his wont—with such symptoms of disaffection; the principal offenders were thrown into the Bastille, and Étienne Pascal, though innocent, was obliged to hide himself in the houses of various friends. Jacqueline, who, in spite of her poetical precocity, was yet a child in all her ways, and exercised over the whole household the sweet fascination of its youngest member, was the chief consolation of his tedious concealment. But in September of the same year she was seized at her father's house with the small-pox, and lay in extreme danger. It is a pleasing proof of the affection which bound together this remark-

* Mad. Périer, ap. Faugère, J. P. pp. 54—57. V. Cousin, J. P. p. 61.

able family, that Étienne Pascal forgot his own risk in that of his motherless daughter; he hastened to her bedside, and did not leave it, even to take necessary repose, till her safety was assured. But returning health did not bring returning beauty: the disease left behind it only too visible marks of its power. Jacqueline, unable to mingle with the gay world of Paris—always ready to caress her—passed the winter contentedly with her childish playthings, and thanked God for His mercies in a poem, which, both in its construction and in the sober piety which it breathes, is far beyond her years.*

In February 1639, the Cardinal took a fancy to see a comedy represented by child actors, and placed the necessary arrangements in the hands of his niece, the Duchesse d'Aiguillon. We are to suppose that the remembrance of Jacqueline's former success had not passed away; for Madame d'Aiguillon sent to ask for her services and for those of her friend, Mademoiselle Saintôt. "M. le Cardinal does not give us pleasure enough, for us to take any pains to please him," was Gilberte Pascal's proud reply to a request which, in most Parisian households, would have been taken as a command. Madame d'Aiguillon, who always appears in the stories of the period as a kind-hearted woman, did not take offence, but pointed out to Mademoiselle Pascal that her compliance might be turned to her father's advantage; and promised all her own influence with her uncle. After some consultation with the friends of the family Gilberte yielded, and Jacqueline studied her part in Scudery's long-forgotten play "L'Amour Tyrannique." The 3rd of April, 1639, was the important day. A fashionable crowd assembled at the Hôtel Richelieu; and the Cardinal's mind had been carefully disabused of his prejudices against M. Pascal. The play succeeded

* V. Cousin, J. P. p. 70.

beyond expectation: the little actress of thirteen was the heroine of the night. No sooner was the representation over, than she left the stage, intending to speak to her patroness, Madame d'Aiguillon; but seeing the Cardinal turn away, feared to lose the occasion, and ventured to accost him without introduction. He sat down again, took her on his knee, and seeing that she wept, caressingly asked her the reason. She faltered out a complimentary address in verse, which she had herself written, asking pardon for her father: Madame d'Aiguillon supported, and Richelieu good-naturedly granted, the petition. In a letter dated the next day, which is still extant, Jacqueline had the happiness of assuring her father that he might safely return. She naïvely recounts the compliments and caresses which had been lavished upon her, and does not forget the comfits and dried fruits with which the little performers were regaled. Her brother's mathematical talents had not been passed over; the Cardinal was anxious to become better acquainted with the whole family. On his return, therefore, Étienne Pascal hastened to thank Richelieu, and took his three children with him. The Cardinal was all affability: the talk was no more of the Bastille, but of employment and promotion; he was ravished to restore M. Pascal to a family which so urgently required all his attention; and he recommended the children to his care, for he hoped himself one day to make them something great. Richelieu was nearer the end of his course than perhaps he thought, when he made these courtly speeches. But they remind us of his offers to St. Cyran, of his visit to Antoine Arnauld; and are another proof that he possessed one characteristic of greatness, the faculty of seeing greatness in others.*

* Mad. Périer, ap. Cousin, J. P. p. 34. Marg. Périer, ibid. p. 55. Lettres de Jacq. Pascal, ibid. p. 72.

Not long after this interview, Étienne Pascal was appointed Intendant of Normandy. The province was greatly disturbed; not only were all the concerns of the revenue in disorder, but government offices had been plundered, and tax-gatherers murdered. The parliament of Rouen was interdicted from the performance of its functions, and the administration of justice entrusted to officers sent from Paris. To remedy such a condition of things Richelieu employed both the military and the civil power of the state; Marshal de Gassier was ordered to march troops into the province, and M. de Paris sent with him as intendant of the army. The other intendant, Étienne Pascal, was especially charged with the reform and collection of the revenue. He discharged the duties of his office with great success, for several years after the death of his patron, and was recalled only when, in 1648, the parliament of Paris took advantage of the Fronde to demand the removal of all provincial intendants.*

The residence of Étienne Pascal in Rouen was the occasion of a new literary triumph for his daughter, the more interesting as it brings her into friendly relations with one of the greatest of French poets, Pierre Corneille. Corneille was a native of Rouen, and had now retired thither to avoid the acknowledged animosity of the great Cardinal. His powers and his reputation were alike at their highest; he had produced the "Cid" in 1636, "Cinna" in 1639; "Les Horaces" is about to follow in 1641, "Polyeucte" in 1643. The competitors with whom he strove for public favour were contemptible, and the world only laughed when Richelieu avowed his preference of "L'Amour Tyrannique" over the "Cid." Racine was born in the very year in which Étienne Pascal came to Rouen; and the days in which Corneille saw his senile efforts rejected by the players are

* Marg. Périer, ap. Cousin, Études sur Pascal, p. 313.

yet far distant. We do not know whether any old tie of friendship united Corneille with the family of Pascal; literature, and the fact that both belonged to the parliamentary society of Rouen, are sufficient to account for the intimacy which certainly existed. Will it be a quite unwarranted flight of imagination to suppose that the poet, still in the first vigour of manhood, and eagerly mounting, step by step, the ladder of fame, may have come sometimes to the house of M. l'Intendant-Général, and read to the quick, bright-eyed girl, or the thoughtful, sickly boy whom he found there, the ringing phrases of "Les Horaces," yet unheard upon the boards? It is at least easy to believe that the grave piety of the household may have turned his thoughts to the display of Christian heroism in the "Polyeucte."

There existed at Rouen a brotherhood of the Conception of the Virgin, founded by some of the chief inhabitants of that city as far back as 1072. After the lapse of 400 years a poetical competition was established in connexion with it: an annual assembly was held, and prizes awarded to compositions in various forms of verse, but all strictly in accordance with fixed rules, and devoted to the single object of celebrating the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin. The whole, from the restrictions of versification anciently imposed upon the competitors, was called, "Les Palinods de Rouen." Corneille himself had won a prize in 1633, and now proposed to Jacqueline that she should enter the lists. His successful poem, rescued from a not quite undeserved obscurity by M. Faugère *, is a comparison between Eve and Mary, drawn out in a series of well-balanced antitheses, and of course all in favour of the latter. Who can resist the theological conclusion? If Eve was

* Jacq. Pascal, preface, p. xix.

formed without taint of original sin, how much more Mary? So the devout poet concludes:—

> "Ce que Dieu donne bien à la mère des hommes
> Ne le refusons pas à la mère de Dieu."

Perhaps a special method of treatment was prescribed to the poets who competed at Rouen; more probably Jacqueline modelled her effort on that of her friend and adviser. Whichever was the case, the poems display a strong family likeness. But the object of comparison is now the ark of the covenant; and the point of the stanzas—neither better nor worse than those of Corneille—is:

> "Si donc une arche simple, et bien moins nécessaire,
> Ne saurait habiter dans un profane lieu;
> Comment penserez vous que cette sainte mère,
> Étant un temple impur, fût le temple de Dieu?"

The prize of December 1640 was adjudged to the young poetess, and brought to her, as her sister narrates, with sound of drum and trumpet. But Corneille, who was present at the adjudication, stepped into the place of her whom he gallantly called "the young absent muse," and thanked the presiding judge in an impromptu stanza, which is as good as impromptu verses usually are. Jacqueline appeared in the following year with a poetical offering of thanks more carefully composed, and so ended her public career as a muse. Her poems were henceforward only for her family and her intimate friends, and in our own day have been recovered from some dusty cabinet of MSS. by the zeal of those who affectionately collect everything that relates to the household of Pascal.*

Meanwhile the brother's education had not been neglected. "During all this time," says Gilberte Pascal, speaking of the period before her father's removal to Rouen, "he con-

* Cousin, J. P. p. 78. Faugère, J. P. appendix, p. 484.

tinued to learn Latin and Greek; and besides that, during and after meals my father conversed with him, sometimes on logic, sometimes on physics, and other parts of philosophy; and this is all that ever he learned, never having been at college or had other masters for these things any more than for the rest. My father took a pleasure, which may very easily be conceived, in the great progress which my brother made in all these sciences; but he did not discern that great and constant application, at so tender an age, might seriously affect his health; and, in truth, it began to be weakened from his eighteenth year. But as the inconveniences which he experienced were not yet very great, they did not prevent him from continuing his ordinary occupations; so that it was at this time, and at the age of eighteen, that he invented that arithmetical machine, by which not only are all kinds of calculations made without pen and without counters, but without a knowledge of any rule of arithmetic, and yet with infallible accuracy." *

This famous machine is said to have owed its origin to filial piety. The finances of Normandy were in great confusion, and Pascal saw with pain the long and monotonous calculations through which his father was compelled to struggle in the attempt to reduce them to order. He conceived, therefore, the idea of a machine, which, by the simple turning of a handle, should perform all the elementary operations of arithmetic. The conception was a new one, and seems to us, accustomed to the mechanical wonders of a later age, to have excited an over-strained admiration in the contemporaries of Pascal. It was no less than an act of creation, they said; an inspiration of intellect into wheels of wood and brass. The execution was harder than the conception, for it cost the inventor all that was left to him of youthful health and vigour. If, as his sister says, the idea

* Mad. Périer, ap. Faugère, J. P. p. 8.

occurred to him in his eighteenth year, the complete realisation of it occupied eight years of labour and anxiety. He made no less than fifty models of various form and materials. He had to contend against both the treachery and the stupidity of his work-people. At one time he gave up the project in disgust, and resumed it only at the request of the Chancellor Seguier, to whom, in 1645, he dedicated the result of his labours. At last in 1649, he obtained a royal patent, which protected him from imperfect imitations, by imposing a fine of 3000 livres upon the vendor of any instrument not certified as genuine by himself. In 1650, he sent his machine to Queen Christina of Sweden, with a letter in which he complimented her as empress of the realm of science. The compliment was not inapt to one who, though already resolved to lay aside her crown, had prevailed upon Des Cartes, Grotius, Salmasius, Vossius, Huet, and many other strangers of less illustrious name, to adorn her court at Stockholm.

To enter upon a description of Pascal's machine would lead us too far from our main purpose; and would also, in the absence of diagrams, be a difficult and thankless task. We have no certain intelligence of its fate. Like other arithmetical machines, it appears to have been rather a marvel of inventive skill than a source of practical advantage; its construction was complicated and easily disarranged; and its powers neither great nor various. It was altered and improved by the illustrious hands of Leibnitz; and with all the earlier machines upon a similar principle, fell into disuse as logarithms became more and more a part of general mathematical knowledge. One which bears the autograph of Pascal, "*Esto probati instrumenti signaculum hoc. Blasius Paschal, Arvernus*, 1652," was long preserved in the royal library at Paris, and is now in the possession of the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers. M. Prospèr

Faugère also states that he saw three at Clermont, Pascal's native place.*

It has been a subject of justifiable regret that Pascal's inventive skill should have been bestowed upon a machine which has proved of little real benefit to mankind, and that so many years of his short life should have added nothing to the stock of human knowledge. While, however, he was still poring over his machine, his attention was turned to a department of science, where his effort soon yielded a brilliant result. The hydraulic engineers of Cosmo de Medicis, Duke of Florence, had been surprised to find that a pump constructed upon the common principle, would not raise water to a greater height above the reservoirs from which it was drawn than thirty-two feet. The received explanation of the action of the pump was, that nature abhorred a vacuum; and that consequently, as fast as a vacuum was formed by the elevation of the piston, the water rushed upwards to fill it. But why should not this be the case at any height? Galileo was asked to solve the mystery. For some unknown reason he did not seriously apply himself to the question, but reaffirming the ancient principle, asserted that it had its limits of application, and that nature did not abhor a vacuum at a greater height than thirty-two feet. He does not seem, however, to have been satisfied with his own reply; for he is said to have commended the difficulty to the researches of his friend and pupil Torricelli. The latter at once perceived that the weight of the water was an element in the problem, and proceeded to try the experiment with some other liquid. He found that a column of mercury twenty-eight inches in height, stood in a tube inverted in a reservoir of the same fluid; and as the specific gravities of water and of mercury

* Recueil d'Utrecht, p. 244. Havet, Notes to Vie de Pascal, p. xvii. Faugère, J. P. p. 9. Maynard, vol. i. p. 171. Œuvres de Pascal, ed. Bossut, vol. iv. pp. 7—50.

were in the ratio of thirty-two feet to twenty-eight inches, concluded that the columns of water and of mercury, of these respective heights, exercised an equal pressure upon their bases. What natural force was it, then, which counterbalanced each of these columns? Torricelli had received from Galileo the truth, that the air was a fluid of a certain weight, and now applied it to explain the new phenomenon. In 1645, he publicly announced that the cause of the suspension of the water in the pump at the height of thirty-two feet, of the mercury in the tube at the height of twenty-eight inches, was the pressure of the air upon the reservoir from which each fluid was drawn. But at the same time, this theory, however true, was in Torricelli's hands only an hypothesis; he had devised and executed no experiments to test it.

He died in 1647, and his theory was unable to make head against the maxim which, strong in the prescription of centuries, tyrannised over men's minds and senses. Some vapours disengaging themselves from the water or the mercury, some "subtle matter," generated no one knew whence or how, stood in the apparently empty space above the liquid, and prevented its ascent. Such were the ideas which satisfied even the powerful mind of Des Cartes, when, about 1646, his friend and correspondent, Père Mersenne, brought the news of Torricelli's experiments from Italy to France. From him, Pascal, still at Rouen, heard the story; and in conjunction with M. Petit, intendant of fortifications, commenced a course of experiments. He did not yet know, we are told, the explanation offered by Torricelli; but had been led by an independent course of thought, to doubt the principle of the abhorrence of a vacuum. He tried experiments similar to those of Torricelli, under every variety of circumstance. He contrived a pipe fifty feet in height; but the water showed no more alacrity to fill a great void than a small one. He

satisfied himself by repeated observations that the vacuum was real, and not apparent only; and found that the supposed "matter" was so subtle as to escape the action both of the senses, and of all scientific tests then known. Accordingly in 1647 he published, as an earnest of a greater work on the same subject, a little book entitled "Expériences Nouvelles touchant le Vide," in which he maintained the reality of the vacuum formed under the circumstances above described.

In order, however, to place the question beyond the possibility of doubt, some crucial experiment was still wanting; and the happy thought occurred to Pascal, that if the height of the water in the pump, or of the mercury in the barometrical tube, depended upon the pressure of an atmospherical column, it would necessarily vary with any variation in the weight of that column. The difficulty was to contrive an experiment in which the weight of the atmospherical column should vary sufficiently to produce a corresponding perceptible variation in the mercury or the water. He hit at last upon the expedient of carrying a barometer to the top of a high mountain, and noting whether the mercury rose in proportion to the supposed diminution of the counterbalancing atmospheric weight. The Puy de Dôme, a mountain 4839 feet in height, which rises abruptly from the town of Clermont, seemed to afford a favourable place for the experiment, and in November, 1647, Pascal requested his brother-in-law, Florin Périer, to undertake it. From various causes it did not actually take place till September 19th, 1648, when it was minutely recorded in a paper published in the same year.*

This celebrated experiment, which was witnessed by a party of scientific inquirers, including more than one

* The narrative may be found in Pascal's works, ed. Bossut, vol. iv. p. 345.

clerical philosopher, was begun in the garden of the Minim Fathers, supposed to be the least elevated spot in the town of Clermont. Two tubes, each 4 feet long, and hermetically sealed at one end, were filled with mercury and inverted in a reservoir of the same fluid. In each the mercury was seen to stand at 26 in. $3\frac{1}{2}$ lines. One tube was left in this position in charge of a Minim Father, who was instructed to watch and report its variations throughout the day. A portion of the same mercury, together with the second tube, was carried by Périer and his friends to the top of the mountain, which was fortunately free from clouds. There the experiment of the garden was repeated, and to the joy and astonishment of all, the mercury refused to rise higher than 23 in. 2 lines. Five times the experiment was made under different circumstances: in a little chapel which stood on the summit, and in the open air; while the weather was fine, and amid the rain and wind which swept over them; but always with the same effect. On the way down another trial was made, which confirmed the former by producing an intermediate result. In the meantime the tube in the garden had shown no sign of variation during the day, and its travelled companion, on being inverted in the mercury by its side, indicated precisely the same atmospherical pressure. The next day a tube was carried up the tower of Notre Dame de Clermont, and again a fall of the mercurial column, corresponding to the height above the garden in which the stationary tube still remained, was observed. A similar experiment was afterwards made by Pascal himself, at the church of St. Jacques de la Boucherie at Paris. In all these cases an invariable ratio between the elevation at which the trial was made, and the height of the mercurial column, was noted. The observation of the changes of the barometer, as we may venture by anticipation to call this rude instrument, was continued during two or three years,

by Florin Périer at Clermont, as well as by Des Cartes and Chanut, the French Ambassador, at Stockholm. The results were transmitted to Pascal, and together with some remarks upon similar experiments which had been made in England by the celebrated Robert Boyle, are preserved in Bossut's edition of his works.*

The publication of the "Expériences Nouvelles" was followed by a controversial skirmish with the Jesuits, which presents a curious analogy with St. Cyran's duel with Garasse. It seems as if the defenders of Port Royal were fated to sharpen upon other fields the weapons which they were to use in the great coming battle of Jansenism. Père Noël, a member of the Society, writes in courteous phrase to Pascal, suggesting difficulties in the way of the new theory. A like courteous answer is returned; and the correspondence, so far, is merely a private interchange of argument between two men of science, and was indeed not printed till 1779. A personal interview is talked of to save Pascal, now seriously ill, the labour of writing; when all at once Noël publishes a treatise, "Le Plein du Vide," in which he brings to bear upon the investigator, who so hardily despises the authority of ages, all his force of reasoning and sarcasm. Pascal, indignant at what he conceives to be a breach of faith, rejoins in a letter addressed to the mathematician, Le Pailleur; while in the following year, 1648, Étienne Pascal mingles in the fray, and reduces Père Noël to affrighted silence. In 1651, a Jesuit professor in a college at Clermont rekindled the dying ashes by a statement made in the course of instruction, that Torricelli and some unknown Polish Capuchin had preceded Pascal in his experiments. Pascal promptly replied in a letter to Ribeyre, a distinguished magistrate of

* Œuvres de Pascal, vol. iv. p. 364, *et seq.*

Clermont; the Jesuit explained, retracted, made compliments; and the controversy came to an end.*

A more important matter was the claim which Des Cartes made to the original suggestion of the experiment of the Puy de Dôme, and the alienation of feeling which it evidently produced between him and Pascal. On the 11th of June, 1649, Des Cartes, then at Stockholm, wrote to the mathematician Carcavi to ask whether Pascal's projected experiment upon the mountains of Auvergne had succeeded. "I might justly," he proceeds, "look to know this from himself rather than from you, because it was I who advised him two years ago to make the experiment, and assured him that, though I had not made it myself, I did not doubt of its success. But as he is a friend of M. de Roberval, who seems to profess himself none of mine . . . . I have reason to believe that he adopts his prejudices, and that it is not prudent for me to address myself to him for what I want."† Carcavi showed the letter to Pascal, who, according to Bossut, "despised it and made no answer." But in the letter to Ribeyre, of which I have already spoken, he says, "It is true, sir, and I assert it without hesitation, that this experiment is of my own invention; and in so far, I may say that the new knowledge which it has revealed to us, is wholly my own." The contradiction is sufficiently direct; are we to believe Des Cartes or Pascal?

The collateral evidence on either side is scanty and conflicting. Several passages in Des Cartes' letters, prior to this date, may be admitted to prove that with Galileo and Torricelli, he was acquainted with the weight of the atmosphere; one ‡ seems to show that he had anticipated Torricelli's explanation of the problem of the pump. On the other

* Bossut, Œuvres de Pascal, vol. iv. pp. 69—221.

† Des Cartes, Lettres, part iii. no. 67, conf. nos. 68, 69, 70.

‡ Quoted by Hallam, Lit. Hist. vol. iii. p. 424.

hand Jacqueline Pascal, in a letter dated September 25th, 1647*, relates the particulars of two visits which Des Cartes paid to her brother in Paris. The conversation turned upon Pascal's recent experiments, and Des Cartes, if the reporter may be trusted, still held to the theory of some subtle matter, which occupied the apparent vacuum. A corroboration of Jacqueline Pascal's statement is afforded by the fact, which the critics do not seem to have noticed, that in both the letters to Carcavi in which Des Cartes asserts his claim, he directly or indirectly reaffirms the theory of subtle matter, which he seems to think is confirmed by the experiment of the Puy de Dôme. It is true that this theory is not necessarily inconsistent with that of atmospheric pressure; and in so far, Jacqueline Pascal's statement does not invalidate Des Cartes' assertion. But the two theories are so closely connected, as to make it improbable that the adherent of the one should have foreseen the new truth involved in the other. The fact too, that Des Cartes busied himself at Stockholm in the year which followed the experiment, in making barometrical observations which were transmitted to Pascal, is an argument on the same side. It is hard to suppose that any man, especially a confessedly jealous man like Des Cartes, would labour in behalf of a rival who was withholding from him a share in the glory of an immortal enterprise.

On the other hand, Des Cartes' character in matters of this kind is not clear. No man's mind ever comprehended the universe of human knowledge in a more imperial grasp; few can be compared with him for the worth and variety of his contributions to the intellectual treasury of the race. By his side Pascal appears narrow, and we turn to the intensity of his genius to compensate us for its comparative want of breadth. But it remains a fact, that while Des

* Cousin, J. P. p. 94.

Cartes was loud in the assertion of his own originality, no man of real eminence in science or in letters was ever exposed to so many accusations of plagiarism. The age was one which teemed with new truth; and it is possible enough that the same discoveries rewarded the search of more than one inquirer, working from the old landmarks in the same direction. But this will not account for all the charges against Des Cartes. Leibnitz, in a remarkable passage quoted by Hallam, has drawn up an extraordinary list of discoveries claimed by him, which are to be found more or less definitely indicated in the writings of his predecessors. "In fine," he concludes, "Des Cartes, as has long been noticed by learned men, and as is too clear in his letters, was an immoderate contemner of others, and through greediness of fame, did not abstain from artifices which would seem to have been hardly honourable." * And one instance in which the charge of plagiarism was all but brought home to Des Cartes, is not without instructive points of resemblance to his controversy with Pascal. In 1631, a little work, entitled "Artis analyticæ Praxis," by Harriott, a companion of Sir Walter Raleigh, was posthumously published, in which important additions were made to the theory of equations. In that year Des Cartes was in England. By and by he adopted in a work of his own, the whole of Harriott's labour; not only making no acknowledgment, but in a letter to Mersenne, positively claiming the merit of entire originality. It is true that he gave to algebraic science an extension of which neither Harriott, nor any previous mathematician had ever dreamed; but the glory of his great achievement cannot wipe out the stain of his small theft. The charge of plagiarism in this matter was urged against him more than once during his lifetime, but without drawing forth any reply.†

* Hallam, Lit. Hist. vol. iii. p. 97.

† Ibid. vol. iii. p. 406.

We must add to this the fact mentioned by Leibnitz in the passage above quoted, that Des Cartes lived on notoriously bad terms with nearly all contemporary men of science. He had a quarrel with Fermat, the famous geometrician of Toulouse, as to their respective claims to the discovery of the theory of maxima and minima; in which all the advantage, at least in point of temper, was on the side of the latter. His disagreement with Roberval was one of the standing scandals of the day in literary circles; it comes out in the letter to Carcavi about the experiment of the Puy de Dôme; and Jacqueline Pascal mentions an altercation between them, which took place at her brother's lodging. And Pascal, who was a member of the same scientific society as Roberval and Fermat, might easily be regarded by Des Cartes as leagued with his foes. The great philosopher had already heard with uneasy mind of Pascal's wonderful promise; and while sharing the throne of European science with Bacon, had condescended to depreciate the performance of a boy of fifteen. I cannot therefore think it wonderful, that remembering some train of ideas which had passed through his mind, or recalling some expression which had dropped from his lips, during his interview with Pascal, he should have persuaded himself that the merit of the experiment was unjustly appropriated by the latter. This would be as characteristic of him, as the assertion of an unfounded claim to originality would be unlike Pascal. The isolation and self-dependence of Pascal's genius; his ignorance of books, and of others' labours; the character of individuality which is so strongly impressed upon all the processes and results of his thought, ought to protect him from the charge of plagiarism even when brought by Des Cartes.*

But there is another side of Pascal's education of which

* Montucla, Histoire des Mathématiques, vol. ii. p. 205. Maynard, vol. i. p. 176, *et seq.*

we have almost lost sight, in tracing the early triumphs o his mathematical and physical genius. From the very first the germ of his final devotion to religious thought is visible in his character. Whatever contradictions seem to be involved in the two halves of his intellectual activity, appear and demand reconciliation at the hands of his biographer, almost as much in the first as in the last years of his life. At present our task is confined to the accurate apprehension of the character, which afterwards we must endeavour to describe as a whole; to tracing the growth of the rival forces, which afterwards came into rude collision, and shattered the feeble body which was the arena of their struggle. Étienne Pascal's was a quiet, grave household. The eldest daughter, four years older than her brother, appears to us, by more glimpses than one, as the little housewife, ruling with childish dignity and trying to fill her mother's place with a thoughtful love beyond her years. In 1641, she married her cousin Florin Périer; but remained for two years in Rouen, dividing, no doubt, her cares between her sister and her own little one. We have seen already, that the elder Pascal had a deep sense of parental responsibility, for he undertook the whole labour of his children's education. A sincere believer in the authority and doctrines of the Church, he was anxious to make them like himself. But let Gilberte Pascal tell her simple story of the religious spirit which pervaded her father's household. She is speaking of her brother's twenty-fourth year*: —

"Up to this time he had been preserved by a special protection of God from the vices of youth; and what is still more strange in a mind of that tone and character, had never been inclined to free thinking in matters of religion, having always confined his attention to natural

* Mad. Périer, ap. Faugère, J. P. p. 10.

phenomena. He has often told me that he owed this, as well as everything else, to my father, who, having himself a very deep respect for religion, had inspired it into him from his childhood; impressing upon him that whatever is the object of faith, cannot be that of reason, and much less subject to it. These maxims which were often repeated to him by a father whom he much esteemed, and in whom he observed great scientific knowledge, accompanied by a power of strong and close reasoning, made so deep an impression upon his mind, that he was not at all shaken by any free-thinking conversation which he heard; and although very young, he looked upon freethinkers as men who held the false principle that the human reason is above all things, and so knew not the nature of faith. And thus this mind, so great, so vast, so full of curiosity, was at the same time submissive as a child's in all matters of religion; and this simplicity has reigned in him all his life, so that even after he resolved to pursue no other study than that of religion, he never applied himself to the curious questions of theology, but employed all the strength of his mind in seeking to know and practise the perfection of Christian morality, to which he consecrated all the talents that God had given him, having no other occupation during the remainder of his life, than that of meditating upon the law of God day and night."

But these general religious impressions were deepened by an event which first brought the Pascal family into connection with the religious party now beginning to be designated by the name of Port Royal. In January, 1646, Étienne Pascal, who had left his house on some errand of charity, fell and broke his thigh. He appealed for surgical aid to two brothers, men of independent fortune in the neighbourhood of Rouen, who, possessing a natural aptitude for bone-setting, had not disdained either to improve the faculty by education, or to hold themselves at the service

of misfortune. They came, remained in his house for three months, and proved to be physicians of the soul no less than of the body. Their manners and conversation attracted the attention of the family to which they were showing such disinterested kindness; the grave and almost stern character which Étienne Pascal had impressed upon his children was not likely to be repelled by an ascetic view of religion; and the works of Jansen, of St. Cyran, of Arnauld, did the rest.*

The way in which these two brothers, MM. de la Bouteillerie and des Landes, had been drawn into the vortex of Jansenism, is sufficiently illustrative of St. Cyran's influence and way of working. M. Guillebert, a young theologian of Caen, became in Paris the fellow-student and friend of Antoine Arnauld. Impressed with his religious views, he asked and obtained an interview with St. Cyran. The usual result followed. St. Cyran, who would spare no pains for a promising proselyte, undertook the direction of his conscience, and formed him after his own model. By and by, Guillebert, who held a professorship in Paris, was presented to a benefice in Normandy, and instead of performing the duties which thus devolved upon him, continued his theological studies in the capital, became a doctor of the Sorbonne, and kept a curate to do his work in the country. St. Cyran, now in Vincennes, remonstrated against such a violation of ecclesiastical morality, and Guillebert at once abandoned Paris for his cure. Here at Rouville, near Rouen, he was the instrument of what, in the religious technology of the day, is called a "revival." He managed the affairs of his parish with ardent zeal and irreproachable tact. Men came from all the country round to hear his sermons; lawyers of Rouen hired apartments in Rouville that they might spend the Sunday there. The testimony of calumny to his success was not wanting;

* Mad. Périer, ap. V. Cousin. J. P. p. 39.

for enemies pretended that a new sect of 'Rouvillistes' was rising in the Church. The Book of Frequent Communion was his practical guide, and many of those who adopted its maxims as a rule of life, entered into more or less close connection with Port Royal. The families of De Bernières, and of Du Fossé, parishioners of Rouville, are already known to us as friends of the community. M. des Landes, one of Étienne Pascal's surgeons, had a daughter in Port Royal, and a son, who for seventeen years was one of its solitaries.

How M. Guillebert again gave up his cure, when De Barcos bade him come to Paris to educate De Saçi; how he took his modest share in the various controversies of grace; how he retired for some years to the Abbey of St. Cyran, and died at last at Paris in 1666, are not matters that need detain us here. M. des Champs des Landes, and his brother, M. de la Bouteillerie, were gentlemen of whom we know little more than that they were of high courage, and full of the exaggerated notions of personal honour, which made France, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, a nation of duellists. How the good curé of Rouville persuaded them to renounce the work of making wounds for that of curing them, is hard to tell. The Book of Frequent Communion was the instrument of this, as of many another religious marvel. Each erected a hospital in his park. One brother who had ten children, prepared ten beds; the other who was childless, was not satisfied with less than twenty. Doubtless, as in the case of Étienne Pascal, they often had an eye to the spiritual as well as the bodily ailments of their patients, and did their best to withdraw from the world, those whom their art had restored to it.*

Blaise Pascal was the first of the family to be moved by the new religious force. "Immediately after these experi-

* Besoigne, vol. iv. p. 128, 376. Du Fossé, p. 76. Recueil d'Utrecht, p. 248.

ments" (on the weight of the air), says his sister, "and when he was not yet twenty-four years of age, Providence having brought about an occasion which compelled him to read books of piety, God so enlightened him by this reading, that he perfectly understood that the Christian religion obliges us to live for God only, and to have no other object than Him; and this truth appeared to him so clear, so necessary, and so useful, that it ended all his researches, so that from this time forward he renounced all other knowledge, to apply himself exclusively to the one thing which Jesus Christ calls needful."* As we shall presently see, this is far too broad a statement to be literally true. Even the famous experiment of the Puy de Dôme is not yet made: the royal patent for the arithmetical machine dates only from 1649. At the same time an impulse was given, which, however it needed in Pascal himself to be afterwards more powerfully renewed, determined from that moment the destiny of the family. That in the youth eagerly weighing the air, or pondering night and day the machine that was to do the work of human brains, lay undeveloped the author of "The Thoughts," is enough to explain the effect produced upon his mind by the passionate, and yet stern and self-restrained theology of Port Royal. Why seek further for reasons? Yet the very severity of the Christian ideal which it presented would be attractive to his strong and patient will; its theory of the omnipotence of the Spirit in the work of human enlightenment and sanctification, strangely fell in with the keenness of his mathematical intellect. We cannot doubt that he possessed, in no common degree, the power of spiritual perception which distinguishes the deeply religious man. That as he penetrated with the swift stride of genius into the mysteries of nature, he had seen, besetting him behind and before,

* Mad. Périer, ap. Faugère, J. P. p. 10.

still deeper and less penetrable mysteries. He had ruined his health, which had never been strong, by excess of application. From his eighteenth year to the hour of his death he never passed a day without pain. In periods of sickness things strangely change their shape and relative importance: to one who stood face to face with an early death, the conditions on which the Church offered salvation would dwarf in interest all pneumatic problems, and a "horror of a vacuum" take possession of the spirit, not to be explained away by any Torricellian methods. What wonder then, if the sight of such a commentary upon St. Cyran's earnest theology, as was supplied by the benevolence of his father's good surgeons, awoke in him new thoughts of the beauty of the Christian life?

The first fruits of Pascal's religious zeal are seen in an affair at which Condorcet sneers as a proof of his fanaticism, which Maynard brings forward in testimony of his unimpeachable orthodoxy, which Victor Cousin has put in the fullest light, by help of hidden manuscript authorities, and pronounces at last, somewhat unwillingly, to need the apologies of a fair biographer. A Capuchin friar, whose real name was Jacques Forton, but who was better known as the Frère St. Ange, came to Rouen in 1647, and was received in the society which Pascal frequented. He had some pretensions to philosophy; had written a book "on the connection of faith and reason," and in Paris, whence he came, had held frequent discussions upon religion with doctors of the Sorbonne. Madame Périer, in her apologetic account of the affair, says that he taught in Rouen "a new philosophy which attracted all the curious. My brother," she proceeds, "having been pressed to go to him by two young men of his own friends, went, but they were much surprised to find, from the conversation which they had with this man, that after stating the principles of his philosophy, he drew from them consequences, as to points

of faith, contrary to the decisions of the Church." * But the *procès-verbal* discovered by M. Cousin sets the matter in quite another light. Nothing is here said of philosophical lectures. On the contrary, "M. de St. Ange, accompanied by a gentleman, his friend, came to the house of M. de Montflavier . . . to see the Sieur Dumesnil his son, who had wished to become acquainted with him, and who was then with the Sieur Auzoult." Conversation followed, first on indifferent, then on philosophical subjects; and the Capuchin began to state his peculiar opinions. What these were it is hardly necessary to say; by and by Pascal accidentally came in; the previous discourse was communicated to him, and the discussion went on with renewed ardour. Frère St. Ange was able, he said, to prove the doctrine of the Trinity to demonstration, and by strict process of reasoning to deduce from that all other truths of philosophy and religion. Hence the only office of faith, taking the word in its Catholic sense, was to give us the knowledge that God is our "fin surnaturelle," supernatural object of all thought and striving; and he asserted that though without faith we could not arrive at this conviction, all other mysteries might be attained by a mind of sufficient vigour, with the help of its own reasoning powers alone. But this was only the beginning of heresies. Jesus Christ was not truly man, or possessed of a human nature. He, as well as the Virgin, was of a different species from the human. The object of creation was the purification of matter, by contact with mind. All the matter in the universe would be gradually worked up in the production of human bodies, which, by becoming the receptacles of a Divine Spirit, were brought into union with God. And so on, through many more absurdities of scholastic theology.

The conversation was broken off at last, "with many

* Mad. Périer, ap. Faugère, J. P. p. 12.

civilities on both sides," and a day fixed for its resumption at St. Ange's rooms, in the house of the Procureur-Général. The interlocutors were the same, with the addition of a doctor of the Sorbonne, named Le Cornier, whom the party met on their way, and carried with them. The same subjects were discussed; and Frère St. Ange did not hesitate to explain and develope his opinions to an attentive and apparently friendly audience. Only when they parted, once more with the usual courtesies, he reminded them, as they left his door, that he had not stated these things as doctrines, but as the results of his own private speculations. Let Madame Périer again tell her tale: "Having considered one with another the danger of leaving a man, who held erroneous opinions, at liberty to instruct young people, they resolved to warn him in the first place, and next, if he resisted the advice which they gave, to inform against him. Thus the matter turned out, for he despised their warning, so that they thought it their duty to denounce him to M. de Bellay*, who then, under a commission from the archbishop, exercised episcopal functions in the diocese of Rouen. M. de Bellay sent for the man, and having interrogated him, was deceived by an equivocal confession of faith, which he wrote to him, and signed with his own hand, making besides, little account of a warning in a matter of such importance, given him by three young men."†

The documents discovered by M. Cousin say nothing of the private warning given by Pascal and his friends to the unlucky St. Ange, while Madame Périer's whole account of the transaction is so inaccurate, as to warrant a suspicion of its exactness in this particular. The long *procès-verbal*, signed by Blaise Pascal and his three associates, itself proves that St. Ange, so far from being actively engaged in propa-

* Camus, Bishop of Bellay, the friend of Francis de Sales.

† Mad. Périer, ap. Faugère, J. P. p. 12.

gating his heresies among the Catholic youth of Rouen, was almost entrapped, under pretence of friendly philosophical dispute, into the statement of his obnoxious opinions. M. de Bellay sided with him as far as he dared, and tried to hush up the whole matter, but in vain. Pascal applied to the archbishop, who was enjoying himself at his country house; and he, a Harlay, uncle of the Harlay who, as Archbishop of Paris, so long harassed Port Royal, was only too ready to spur on his reluctant subordinate. The matter was brought before the bishop in council, a new declaration made by the accusers, and an answer to the charges demanded of Frère St. Ange. The preamble to his reply shows the light in which he looked upon the accusation: "Although these propositions," he says, "ought not to be received, since he had neither preached, dogmatised, nor taught in the town of Rouen, and although the very words, 'advanced in private conferences' form more than half his justification, yet, as it is always advantageous to a priest and doctor to have an opportunity of proving his orthodoxy, he is willing to meet the articles of accusation." This he does, in an apparently conclusive way, by placing side by side with the inculpated propositions, passages from a book of his, called "Méditations Théologiques," which had been printed with learned approbations and the royal privilege, two years before. But Pascal was not yet satisfied, and again prevailed with the archbishop to set M. de Bellay in motion. A second declaration, even more precise than the first, was exacted from St. Ange, and then the bishop absolutely refused to go further. The father was called in to moderate the theological zeal of the son, and by his intervention peace was restored to all the contending parties. Madame Périer, and after her, the Abbé Maynard, see nothing in all this that is not honourable to Pascal's orthodoxy; shall we not act most wisely in falling back upon his youth, and the fresh impulse just given to the

religious side of his character as his best excuses? He has yet to learn in the school of painful experience what orthodoxy and persecution mean. After the affair of the Formulary, I think that he would have been more just to Frère St. Ange. That now his zeal for truth should have outrun his fairness and his charity, is a fact, unhappily, not without many parallels in Church history.*

From Blaise Pascal the new religious influence radiated through the family. First Jacqueline, then Gilberte and her husband, who visited Rouen in 1646, last of all even Étienne Pascal yielded to the impulse, and henceforward observed, with greater or less consistency, the maxims of life current at Port Royal. But the impression made upon Jacqueline was the deepest and most lasting. At the close of 1646 she received from M. de Bellay the sacrament of confirmation, for which she had prepared herself by studying the writings of St. Cyran. "From that moment," says her sister, "she was entirely changed." The monastic life, to which she had hitherto been averse, began to present itself to her mind as the only condition in which she could work out her conception of Christian duty. When in 1647 she accompanied her brother on a journey to Paris, which he made in the hope of shaking off his painful and incapacitating ailments, the desire was strengthened and made more definite by the preaching of Singlin. She now wished to enter Port Royal de Paris, and to submit herself to the authority of Angélique Arnauld. M. Guillebert supplied the necessary link between the Pascals and Port Royal: Singlin joyfully accepted so promising a penitent; and, with her brother's full approval, Jacqueline made many visits to the sisterhood and their Abbess. But in May 1648, Étienne Pascal came to Paris,

* Cousin, Études sur Pascal, p. 343, *et seq.* Maynard, vol. i. p. 30, *et seq.*

and Singlin insisted that he should be informed of his daughter's new schemes. Blaise undertook the task, but did not meet with the ready acquiescence which he expected. The elder Pascal, divided between natural feeling and a Catholic belief in the superior perfectness of the monastic life, first asked time for consideration, and then sternly refused his assent. Neither son nor daughter had, he thought, dealt openly and fairly with him. The change in Jacqueline's mind had been made known to him only when it was about to issue in irrevocable action. He could trust them no longer; henceforward they must be content to be watched. It is a significant instance of the moral confusion which ensues from the conflict of the monastic theory with common home duties, that Jacqueline Pascal submitted to the supervision, yet contrived to see Singlin, and to receive letters from Port Royal, and that her sister tells the story of deceit with ill-concealed complacency. She withdrew, as far as possible, from society, gave up the amusements of her age and station, and lived, to the best of her ability, a nun's life in her father's house. At last, seeing that her determination was not to be overcome, Étienne Pascal gave way. It was not, he said, that he at heart disapproved of her wish, but he felt that he had not long to live, and if she would postpone the execution of her plans till after his death, he, on his part, would not trouble her with any proposals of marriage, and would leave her free to regulate her life as she pleased. This conversation took place in May 1649, and the compromise lasted till the death of Étienne Pascal in September 1651. The intervening time, seventeen months of which Jacqueline spent with her father and sister at Clermont, was passed in careful preparation for life at Port Royal. She rarely left her room, except to visit the sick, or to attend the offices of religion. She disciplined herself by silence, by fasts, by watching. She

abjured the exercise of her poetical talents at a word from Agnès Arnauld. She wore, as far as possible, the monastic garb. And when her filial duties had been completely performed, she hastened to the refuge which had so long appeared to her all that was holy and desirable.*

But now an opposition arose from a quite new and unexpected source. Her brother, who three years before had fostered and aided her design, preferred a request, like that which from Étienne Pascal had been equivalent to a command. He had been deeply moved by his father's death; his own life was a constant struggle with pain; his only other sister was busy with her husband and children in Auvergne; would not Jacqueline at least postpone for a time the execution of her purpose? He asked the delay so much as a right, that she was afraid to wound him by a direct denial, and without promising anything for the future, announced her intention of making a 'retreat' at Port Royal. Even this was done swiftly and secretly. "We said no good-bye" writes Madame Périer†, "lest we should give way to our feelings, and I went out of her sight, when I saw her ready to leave the house." She was a little more than twenty-six years of age, when on the 4th of January, 1652, she thus entered Port Royal. The years which she had already spent in half monastic seclusion, were accepted in place of the twelve months' trial in the house as a postulant; and in May she was received as a novice. But first she announced her intention to her brother in a letter, which, in its grave eloquence, is worthy of the sister of Pascal. She is free to do as she will: God, whose favours and whose chastisements are inextricably intertwined, has removed the only lawful obstacle to her

* Mad. Périer, ap. Cousin, J P. p. 40, *et seq.* Recueil d'Utrecht, p. 252, *et seq.* Lettres de la Mère Agnès, vol. i. pp. 165—196.

† Cousin, J. P. p. 53.

liberty of action. But that she may take the vows with peace and joy, she needs her brother's consent. "For this reason," she continues, "I address myself to you, as in some sort the master of my future fate, to say to you, Do not take away from me that which you cannot give. For, although God made use of you to procure for me progress in the first movements of His grace, you know sufficiently well that from Him alone proceed all your love for what is good, and all your joy in it; and that thus you are quite able to disturb my joy, though not to restore it to me, if once I lose it by your fault. You ought to know, and in some degree to feel my tenderness through your own; and to be able to judge if I am strong enough to bear the trial of the grief which I shall suffer. Do not reduce me to the necessity of putting off what I have desired so long and so ardently, and thus expose me to the chance, either of losing my vocation, or of doing poorly and with a languor, which would partake of ingratitude, an action which ought to be all fervour, and joy, and charity."*

It would be hard to quote more of this touching letter without transcribing the whole. Pascal was not convinced by it, and came to Port Royal next day to try the effect of personal persuasion. At first he had asked for a delay of two years; now he begged only for a postponement to the festival of All Saints. Even this was denied him: Jacqueline stood firm; and the arguments of D'Andilly, who acted as mediator between the brother and sister, effected at least an external agreement.† But when, in June of the succeeding year, the time came for Jacqueline's final profession, a new difficulty arose. She was unwilling to enter the monastery without a dowry: some small sum of ready

* Cousin, J. P. p. 152.

† Mad. Périer, ap. Cousin, J. P. p. 52. Lettres de J. P. ibid. pp. 150—160.

money which had come into her possession at her father's death, had been expended in charity, and the dowry could be raised only on the security of the yet undivided inheritance of the family. Pascal had by this time attained to a position in the society of the capital which his moderate means were no more than able to support; and he, if not Madame Périer, had begun to reckon upon Jacqueline's share of the property. Sœur Euphémie, as she now called herself, has left a long memoir, in which, desiring to give her testimony to the disinterestedness of Port Royal, she has narrated all her troubles. Neither Singlin, nor Angélique, nor Agnès Arnauld, would suffer her to delay her profession, or to make a legal claim upon her relations. They were ready to receive her with or without a dowry; better a thousand times that she should come to Christ portionless, than break the ties of love which had hitherto bound her to her brother and sister. Temporal were absolutely valueless in comparison with spiritual things; food and raiment would not be wanting either to her or her companions in the house; what more was needed? So when her brother came to see her, she made neither complaint nor claim, and left it to his love to conjecture the cause of the sadness which overclouded her usually gay spirits. He began to recite his grounds of vexation; but could not persevere, when she told him that the whole matter was settled as he had wished. "I declared to him," she says, "with all the gaiety which my then state of mind allowed, that since the house was charitable enough to receive me gratuitously, and my profession would therefore not be deferred, I was no longer in any anxiety, except to act rightly, and to draw down upon myself the grace which I needed in order to become a true nun." * Pascal yielded, and promised to take upon himself the

* Mémoires pour servir, vol. iii. p. 93.

duty of providing for Jacqueline's life at Port Royal; a duty, which we are allowed to suppose, though we are not directly told, that he discharged in a liberal spirit. But La Mère Angélique, not unwilling to accept a gift, was too proud to take one which was grudgingly bestowed. When the necessary deeds were to be signed, she said to Pascal, that in case Jacqueline should have failed to set the matter in its true light, she felt it her duty to speak to him. "I conjure you, in God's name, to do nothing from any human motives; and except you are disposed to do this alms in the spirit of almsgiving, not to do it at all. See, Monsieur, we have learned from the late M. de St. Cyran to receive nothing for God's house which does not come from God. Whatever is done from any other motive than charity, is not a fruit of God's Spirit, and is consequently such as we ought not to receive."* Pascal professed the simplicity of his motives, and the affair ended there. Jacqueline took the veil as a sister of Port Royal on the 5th of June, 1653.†

In December 1654, Blaise Pascal followed his sister's example, and exchanged the free gaiety of his life at Paris for the austere solitudes of Port Royal des Champs. But of the period between what his biographers call his first and second conversions it is not easy to gain an accurate conception. The technical terms of a sect are not absent from the lips of its most sincere adherents, and are rarely to be interpreted in their literal meaning. A worldly and ill-regulated life might signify, from the mouth of a Jansenist, any which was not formed upon the monastic model, as, even yet, to magnify the sins of a sinner is a common way of magnifying the glory of his conversion. We must walk warily, according to the indications afforded by the facts of the case; for they are plainly distorted, on

* Mémoires pour servir. vol. iii. p. 100.

† Ibid. part ii. rel. xxix. vol. iii. p. 54, *et seq.*

the one side, by the supposed necessities of a religious theory, and perhaps bent back, on the other, by the loving force of sisterly partiality.

At the end of the year 1647 Pascal tore himself away from his mathematical and physical studies, and went, by medical advice, to Paris. His health was completely ruined. He could swallow no liquids that were not warm, and even these only drop by drop, an incapacity which inflicted frightful torture upon a patient in those days of quart doses and daily purgatives.* The headaches, which dated from this period, became a matter of common talk in Paris; Madame de Sévigné † alludes to them as too well known to require explanation. Another account ‡ adds that for some time he was paralysed from the waist downwards, so as to be unable to walk without the aid of crutches; and that he wore socks steeped in brandy in the hope of restoring some vital warmth to his feet. He was still in the first glow of his religious enthusiasm when he arrived in Paris; and the impression which had been made upon him by the curé of Rouville was naturally deepened by the personal influences of Port Royal. We have already seen that Jacqueline Pascal never swerved from the path in which her first relations with Singlin seemed to place her; why, for a year or two, the tie of companionship with her brother should have been broken, is not easy to say. The distractions of Paris could not have been the sole cause; for from May 1649 to November 1650, he was with his father in Auvergne. Étienne Pascal's death deeply touched him, but did not prevent him from trying to interpose between Jacqueline and her scheme of retirement. After the lapse of another year,

* Mad. Périer, ap. Faugère, J. P. p. 15.
† Lett. lxxx.
‡ Marg. Périer, ap. Faugère, J. P. p. 453.

we find him reckoning upon Jacqueline's share of the common inheritance as a means of maintaining his social position; and Marguerite Périer tells us that he had formed a definite plan of buying an appointment and marrying. Her language is explicit enough*: "As he had been forbidden to study, he was little by little induced to see the world; to play and to amuse himself by way of passing time. At first this was moderate; but afterwards he gave himself wholly up to vanity, to uselessness, to pleasure, and to amusement, without, however, proceeding to any irregularity of life. The death of his father only gave him more opportunity and greater means of continuing this way of living. But when he was most ready to enter into engagements with the world, to marry, and to buy an appointment, God touched him a second time."† His sister, who, however, gives no details of this period of his life, speaks less decidedly, and bears additional testimony to his freedom from all gross vice. Having alluded to the opinion of his physicians, she goes on to say‡: "My brother had some difficulty in yielding to this advice, for he saw danger in it, but at last followed it, believing that he was under an obligation to use every possible means for the restoration of his health; and he imagined that honourable amusements could not harm him, and so went into the world. But although, by the mercy of God, he was always free from vice, nevertheless as God called him to a great perfection, He would not leave him there, and made use of my sister for this design, as He had formerly used my brother, when He wished to withdraw her from her engagements with the world." So when La Mère Angélique, in her conversation with Jacqueline, represents

* Recueil d'Utrecht, p. 257.

† Conf. Marg. Périer, ap. Faugère, J. P. p. 453.

‡ Faugère, J. P. p. 15.

her brother as devoted to the world, its vanities and its amusements*, and Jacqueline, writing to Madame Périer from Port Royal des Champs, uses similar expressions†, we must make some allowance for the necessary unfairness of monastic judgment on such a point, as well as for regret that so brilliant a convert should have eluded the grasp of their directors.

But we are not without positive evidence on the other side. One of the earliest of Pascal's compositions is a "Prayer to God for help to make a good use of sickness," written, it is supposed, about the end of 1647, or the beginning of 1648. It is too long to admit of the idea that it formed a part of his habitual devotions; it resembles rather those meditations addressed to God, which so abound in the Confessions of St. Augustine. But its spirit is that of the purest and most self-sacrificing piety; it soars above the level of resignation into the upper air of joyful acquiescence in the Divine Will. "Suffer my pains to appease Thine anger. Make them the occasion of my salvation and my conversion. May I never more wish for health and for life, except to employ it, and end it for Thee, and with Thee, and in Thee. I ask of Thee neither health nor sickness, nor life, nor death; but that Thou shouldest dispose of my health and my sickness, my life and my death, for Thy glory, for my salvation, and for the benefit of the Church, and of Thy saints, of whose fellowship I hope, by Thy grace, to form a part. Thou alone knowest what is expedient for me; Thou art the sovereign Lord; do as Thou wilt. Give me Thy mercies or take them away; only conform my will to Thine, and grant that in humble and perfect submission, and in holy trust, I may apply myself to receive the commands of Thine Eternal Providence, and adore equally all that descends upon me from Thee." ‡

* Mém. pour servir. vol. iii. p. 75.

† Cousin, J. P. p. 232.

‡ Pensées, ed. Faugère, vol. i. p. 75.

This was probably written soon after what is called his first conversion, and before he had fallen away to the worldly life which Port Royal deplored. But three years later, when in September 1651, his father died, at the very threshold of the difference in feeling between himself and Jacqueline, he wrote a long letter to Florin and Gilberte Périer, which furnished to the first edition of the "Pensées" a series of thoughts on death, but which has only lately been printed in its original shape. It is hardly necessary to describe it; it is enough to say, that whatever the theological value of its speculations, it is evidently the product of a truly religious mind, startled for the moment into a deeper than its ordinary solemnity. There is no trace in it of the passion which we might expect to see, if any remorse had mingled with Pascal's filial sorrow; he stands by the grave of a good and wise father, with eyes indeed filled with tears, but with clean hands and a quiet heart. He claims the consolations of religion as if he had a right to them; and confidently assumes the duty of interpreting the sorrow and resignation of his sisters as well as his own.*

The only other work of Pascal's which dates from this period, is one which has recently been discovered by M. Victor Cousin, among the MSS. of the Abbey of St Germain des Près. The copy thus disinterred, the only one known to exist, is not in Pascal's familiar handwriting, and even in its title does not confidently assert its authorship; but M. Cousin's judgment is formed upon internal evidence, and has been approved by critics who are usually not unwilling to differ from him. Here at least we may expect to gain an insight into the nature of Pascal's worldliness; for in a "Discourse on the Passions of Love,"—so the fragment is entitled,—neither the mathematician nor

* Pensées, ed. Faugère, vol. i. p. 17, *et seq.*

the theologian speaks.* The little treatise is such as we might expect, not from one whose pleasures overpassed the bounds of purity, but from the young man who had formed his conception of the female character in a religious household, and whose observations of the connexion between the sexes had been made in a society from which the tradition of a grave and courtly gallantry had not yet departed. He begins with high metaphysical theories, in the manner of Plato, as to the nature and origin of love; and then descends upon the characteristics of human love in a series of remarks which irresistibly suggest the idea that he had felt the passion, whose growth and changes he so well describes. The whole paper has a fragmentary air, as if it were only the sketch of a fuller work; the sentences are short and aphoristic; the divisions of the subject are not so much discussed as indicated in a few pregnant words. But what we have especially to note now is, that the air throughout is pure and sweet. There is no trace of moral miasma on the breezes. The utterance is that of a virgin heart, throbbing with new passion, yet hardly daring to reveal its secret to the beloved object; learning to interpret the hidden indications of look, and tone, and manner; and indemnifying itself for enforced silence by sweet soliloquy.†

Is it, then, true that Pascal loved? And if so, who was the object of his passion? Those who feel that the consciousness of love is a revelation of that which no books can teach, will easily answer the first question in the affirmative, of the anonymous author of the "Discourse on the Passion of Love." No tradition remains to throw light upon this dark place of Pascal's life: Port Royal was not

* This "Discourse" was published for the first time in the "Révue des Deux Mondes," Sept. 15th, 1843.

† For the discourse and the account of its discovery, see Cousin, Études sur Pascal, p. 475.

interested in preserving such, and to Port Royal we owe nearly all our knowledge of Pascal. But we know that he lived much with his superiors in rank; and of this fact, together with a passage in the "Discourse," his biographers have made warp and woof to weave a long conjectural romance. The passage is the following * : —

"Man, by himself, is an imperfect thing: to be happy he needs to find a second. He often searches for this in a condition of life equal to his own, because the liberty and opportunity of declaring himself are there most easily to be met with. Nevertheless, we sometimes look far above ourselves, and feel the fire increase, although we dare not confess it to her who is its cause.

"When one loves a lady of unequal rank, ambition may accompany the beginning of love; but in a little while the latter becomes the master. He is a tyrant who endures no companion; he will be alone; all the passions must bend and obey him.

"A high friendship fills the heart of man much more completely than a common and equal one; little things float to and fro in its space; only great ones fix themselves and remain there."

M. Faugère and M. Cousin agree in believing that Pascal vainly loved some lady of exalted rank; but while the former conjectures that the object of his affection might have been Mademoiselle de Roannez, the sister of his bosom friend, the Duc de Roannez, the latter rejects the supposition as "an insult to Pascal's loyalty and good sense." It is necessary that we should learn to know the brother and sister; without committing our faith to any uncertain love story, we may do so now.

Gouffier, Duc de Roannez, was seven or eight years younger than Pascal, and bound to him by a love, in which

* Cousin, Études sur Pascal, p. 490.

admiration of his intellectual superiority had no small share. We do not know how they were first brought together; but soon M. de Roannez could not live without Pascal, gave him apartments in his house, and took him more than once to Poitou, of which province he was governor. His appears to have been one of those natures which, without much force or originality of their own, possess the happy faculty of recognising and honouring these qualities in others. He yielded to his friend the whole direction of his life; put himself into the hands of Singlin when Pascal went to Port Royal; offended his relations by refusing to marry the richest heiress of the kingdom; ranged himself on the Jansenist side in the affair of the Formulary; and, finally, transferred title, estate, and ancestral debts to his brother-in-law, content that the last Duc de Roannez should be remembered only as the friend of Pascal. That the intercourse involved no unmanly subservience on the part of Pascal, we might conjecture, even if we did not know it. But Nicole, in his "Treatise on the Education of a Prince," published in 1670, has preserved three short "Discourses on the Condition of the Great," being his recollection of an exhortation given by Pascal to a young person of high rank, whom tradition, in spite of some chronological difficulties, identifies with M. de Roannez. We have space for only one extract, which, however, sufficiently exemplifies the spirit of the whole.* After speaking of the two kinds of greatness, the natural and the social, Pascal says: "One must speak to kings upon one's knees; one must stand up in the chambers of princes. To refuse them this respect is folly and meanness of spirit.

"But as for the natural respect, which consists in esteem, we owe it only to natural greatness; and to the qualities

* Pensées, ed. Faugère, vol. i. p. 345.

contrary to this natural greatness we owe, on the contrary, contempt and aversion. It is not necessary that I should esteem you because you are a duke, but it is necessary that I should salute you. If you are both a duke and an honourable man, I shall render what is due to both. I shall not refuse the ceremony which you deserve in your quality of duke, nor the esteem which you deserve in your quality of honourable man. But if you were a duke without being an honourable man, I should still do justice; for in rendering to you the external respect which social order has attached to your birth, I should not fail to feel for you the internal contempt which the baseness of your spirit would deserve."

Is not this passage a proof that Pascal, like all other kings of men, was too conscious of his royalty to acknowledge, with more than an outward respect, the artificial distinctions of social rank? And, on the other hand, the young duke, who attached himself for life to so honest a teacher, could not have been destitute of some of the noblest elements of character.

Charlotte Gouffier de Roannez, his sister, was born in 1633, and would, therefore, be in the earliest bloom of womanhood at the time of Pascal's first intimacy with her brother. Her's is a sad history. Of her early life we know little: two sisters, of whom one was Abbess of Riel, had embraced the monastic life; she lived "in the world" with her mother. The inheritance of the family was concentrated upon the duke; so that, although more than one offer of marriage was made to Mademoiselle de Roannez, none of the proposed bridegrooms were men of very high rank or large possessions. Why should not Pascal have looked up to her? asks M. Faugère; his family boasted an ancient patent of nobility; his means, if not ample, were sufficient; the ineffaced recollection of his youthful fame lent a charm to a fine face and agreeable manners; the superiority of his genius would help to overbear dis-

tinctions of rank. Who can tell that the hopelessness of such a passion may not have had something to do with that weariness of the world which stole over him in 1654? We know not; probably never shall know. In December 1654 he flies to Port Royal des Champs; at the end of 1656 we find him engaged in a religious correspondence with Mademoiselle de Roannez. The friends of Port Royal have preserved for us extracts from nine of these letters, in which one critic at least has been able to trace "a tender solicitude not explicable by charity alone."* To us the only fact which throws any light on the possible relations between Pascal and Mademoiselle de Roannez is the existence of the correspondence; for its Jansenist editors have made their extracts with too much care to permit any expression, which passes the limits of religious exhortation, to come down to posterity. Next year the result of his influence became plain. Mademoiselle de Roannez, perhaps to avoid the importunities of a suitor, took advantage of some trifling ailment in her eyes to make a nine days' round of prayer before the Holy Thorn, then the object of enthusiastic popular veneration at Port Royal de Paris. The desire of the religious life took entire possession of her; and, disregarding her mother's strenuous opposition, perhaps relying on her brother's tacit approval, she fled one morning to Port Royal, where she was received by the Abbess and Singlin. In vain her mother implored her to return; she entered upon the novitiate with "extraordinary fervour," and, as Sœur Charlotte de la Passion, prepared to live and die in the house. Madame de Roannez then had recourse to the Queen-mother, who caused a *lettre-de-cachet* to be issued, commanding the Abbess of Port Royal to restore the novice to her friends. The parting was effected only by a display of legal force;

* Pensées, ed. Faugère, Introd. p. lxv.

and Mademoiselle de Roannez returned home to live the monastic life in her mother's house. She cut off her hair, took voluntary vows of chastity and retirement, and for a time steadfastly resisted every attempt made by her friends to procure her settlement in marriage. The influence of Port Royal was still strong with her; Singlin and La Mère Agnès directed her conscience; and Pascal, either in his own person, or through his sister Madame Périer, maintained his old ascendancy. But in 1665 she was left to her own weakness. Pascal and Singlin were dead, Port Royal in the agony of persecution, Agnès Arnauld imprisoned, and Madame Périer compelled to leave Paris for Auvergne. It was now well known in the family that her brother had resolved not to marry; and all the energy of her sisters, themselves nuns, was exerted to persuade her to some fitting match. Such was before long found in the person of M. de la Feuillade, a younger son of a noble house, to whom, with the King's sanction, the lands, title, and debts of the Duc de Roannez were to be transferred. She yielded, and never after ceased to repent. Her husband exchanged the dukedom of Roannez for that of Feuillade, which was created in his person, and the name which she had sacrificed herself to perpetuate, passed away from the roll of French noblesse. Till her death in 1683, she was a martyr to disease, and underwent many painful operations, which she bore quietly and bravely, in the hope that they might be accepted as some expiation of her weakness. Of her four children, one did not live to be baptized; another was a cripple; the third, a daughter, did not attain womanhood; in the fourth the dukedom of Feuillade expired. She died at last under the knife, leaving by her will 3000 livres to support a lay sister in Port Royal, who should fill the place which she had left, and procure pardon for her sin by prayer and mortification. The first lay sister admitted on this foundation was the last nun that Port Royal was suffered to receive.

Did I not truly say that this was a sad history? The saddest, I think, which the annalist of Port Royal has to tell; and yet one repeated in hundreds of cases, which, had they been those of a duke's daughter, might have been told as circumstantially as this. To say that disappointed love drove Charlotte de Roannez into the cloister, is to utter a conjecture which will never, in all likelihood, receive either confirmation or denial; but, in the absence of evidence, to ascribe the retirement of Pascal to such a motive is wilfully to misunderstand the depth and force of his character. He was not a man to abjure the world, as a child, who cannot reach its toy, sulks in a corner; he weighed the world and the cloister in his Catholic balance, — the only balance he had, — and chose what appeared to him the better part. Even so he did not finally withdraw from the conflict of human interests, but re-entered it from another side. The author of the "Provincial Letters" cannot be said to have abdicated his influence on society; and the "Thoughts" have swayed the mind of posterity more than the experiment of the Puy de Dôme. *She* sought in the cloister's living death, repose from temptations which she doubted her ability to overcome, and deliverance from a haunting weakness, in the regularity of monastic prayer and observance. The trial was never made; she did not know that it might have failed; she felt that her worldly life had betrayed even more than the instability which she had feared; and so looked upon Port Royal, from the day of her marriage, as a paradise of holiness, from which her own sin had shut her out. Who can tell how many there have been to whom the other side of the alternative has revealed its hollowness; who, imprisoned in the changeless round of convent devotion, have panted for the free air of worldly love and duty?*

* Marg. Périer, ap. Cousin, Études sur Pascal, pp. 390—396. Lettres de Pascal, ibid. pp. 431—451. Nécrologe, p. 76, *et seq.* Rec. d'Utrecht, p. 301.

Another friendship, which dates from this period, may help to throw light upon Pascal's so-called worldly life. Jean Domat was also a native of Clermont, and two years younger than Pascal. His family was bourgeois, but maintained through the Church a connexion with a higher rank in society; for his great uncle was the Jesuit Father Sirmond, confessor of Louis XIII., and Antoine Arnauld's first antagonist.* One brother became a Jesuit; Jean Domat, the care of whose education Sirmond assumed, passed through the seminaries of the Society with brilliant success, and applied himself to the law. Mathematics first brought him into contact with Pascal; together they made experiments on the weight of the atmosphere; till at last a close friendship united them, and, in spite of Domat's Jesuit education, he became Pascal's ally in his resistance to Arnauld and Nicole in the matter of the Signature. To Domat Pascal confided his writings on the Formulary, to be published or suppressed, according to the necessities of the case, and his was the hand which tended Pascal in his last illness. But a long and useful life waited for the younger of the two friends. He had married at the age of twenty-two, and a family of thirteen children rose about him. For thirty years he filled with honour a high legal office at Clermont; resolute and impartial in the discharge of his duties, and noted for his firm opposition to Jesuit intrigue and encroachment. His treatise "Les Lois Civiles dans leur ordre naturel" † was accomplished under royal patronage, and was acknowledged at once to be the greatest work on jurisprudence which France had yet produced. Boileau ‡ pronounced him "the restorer of reason to jurisprudence." "He is incomparably," says Victor Cousin §, "the greatest jurisconsult of the

Lett. d'Angélique Arnauld, vol. iii. p. 407. Lett. d'Agnès Arnauld, vol. i. p. 445. Pensées, ed. Faugère, Introd. p. lxv.

* Vol. i. p. 182.

† 3 vols. 4to, 1694.

‡ Quoted by Ste Beuve, ii. 500.

§ Jacq. Pascal, p. 425.

seventeenth century: he inspired, and almost formed D'Aguesseau; he has sometimes anticipated Montesquieu, and prepared the way for that general legal reform which was undertaken by the republic, and executed by the empire. 'Les Lois Civiles dans leur ordre naturel' is, as it were, the preface to the Code Napoléon." Domat died in 1696, in his seventy-first year, having just finished the work of his life, and leaving behind him the reputation of one whose grave and steadfast character enabled him to fulfil the requirements of his Christian calling without flying from the temptations, or abandoning the duties of common social life. His only conversion was from the prejudices of his Jesuit education to Jansenism: we hear of no excesses of worldliness, which should lead, by natural recoil, to excesses of monasticism. Yet we may note that he was the friend of Pascal's worldly, as well as of his religious years, and that the amity which began in the one period, was continued, apparently without break or change, in the other.*

If for a moment we resume in this place the story of Pascal's scientific activity, we shall see that he did not long regard the prohibition of study with which his physicians sent him to Paris in 1647. He never again applied himself to it with the painful assiduity which had been necessary for the perfection of his arithmetical machine, and which had so ruined his health. The wonderful rapidity and accuracy of his mental operations, enabled him to produce great results at the cost of comparatively little exertion. His barometrical experiments were continued during the years 1649, 1650, 1651, and the results embodied in his "Treatise on the Weight of the Air," written in 1653.† The

* Cousin, J. P. Appendix III. Documents inédits sur Domat, p. 425. Rec. d'Utrecht, p. 273.

† The "Traité de la Pesanteur de la Masse de l'Air," and the "Traité de l'Equilibre des Liqueurs," both intended, according to Bossut, to form part

royal patent for the arithmetical machine is dated May 22nd 1649, and he sends the machine itself to Queen Christina of Sweden in 1650. He investigates the laws of the equilibrium of fluids, and lays the foundation of hydrostatical science. He determines many curious numerical problems by his 'Arithmetical Triangle,' which Montucla* characterises as "a truly original and singularly ingenious invention." He engages in a long correspondence with Fermat, the celebrated geometrician of Toulouse; at the request of the Chevalier de Meré, a well known gambler, he investigates the theory of probabilities; and in 1654, the year of his final retirement, he presents to the learned Society, of which his father had been a member, eleven geometrical treatises in the Latin language. To this period of his life also we must refer a scheme which was not put into execution till 1662. Pascal was the inventor of the omnibus. The privilege of placing what were called "carrosses à cinq sols" upon certain routes through the city of Paris, was granted by royal patent, dated January 1662, to the Duc de Roannez and two other noblemen; and we possess a lively letter from Gilberte Pascal to M. de Pomponne, giving a glowing account of the first success of the experiment. An independent tradition ascribes the origination of the idea to Pascal; it is certain that he had an interest in the undertaking, for he mortgaged his share of the first year's profits to raise money for immediate almsgiving.†

In face of all these facts, of his sister's and his niece's attestations to his exemption from gross vice, of his distinct expression of religious faith at various intervals, and of the character of his known friendships—I cannot agree with those biographers who speak of this period of Pascal's life,

of a larger work on the vacuum, were written in 1653, but not published till 1663, the year after Pascal's death.

* Histoire des Mathématiques, vol. ii. p. 63.

† Faugère, J. P. pp. 26, 80.

in terms which carry with them the suspicion of profligacy or sensual indulgence. An Augustinian theology makes another and a darker estimate of conduct than a philosophical morality; and inverting the old maxim, supposes the greatest saint to have been the greatest sinner. The theory of monasticism works in the same direction, and mistrusts the purity of any life, the ardour of any devotion, which do not assume its forms and own its restraints. There were reasons enough why Pascal should have returned to the eagerness of piety which once before possessed him, without adding remorse to the number. His life was one long-continued pain. Of his sisters, Gilberte was far away in Auvergne, filled with the thousand solicitudes of a wife and mother; and Jacqueline, the best beloved, from whom he had parted half in anger, seemed to beckon him to her side at Port Royal. The society of either, or still more surely an honourable and happy love, might have preserved him to the world. The strong man, who willingly yields himself to the influence of a wise and gentle woman, asserts his superiority over friends of his own sex; and so Pascal carried Roannez and Domat with him into the Jansenist ranks. He was, as Le Maître feared himself might be, "demi-vivant, ou demi-mort," unable, for health's sake, to throw his vast energies into physical studies; profoundly dissatisfied with the littleness and hollowness of common social life; a great heart half empty, a great mind half idle. A keen conscience needs no more to produce the deep discontent, which in duller spirits is awakened only by the consciousness of gross and wilful sin; there are passionate and energetic souls, which recoil more eagerly from moral listlessness, than even from the feverish excitement of self-indulgence. And the time had now come at which the great struggle between religion and the world was to be fought out in Pascal's heart, which, despairing of reconciling the rival duties, shall give itself wholly up to God.

In July 1653 Madame Périer was dangerously ill, and Jacqueline expected to hear by every post that all was over. In this extremity she wrote to her brother-in-law a letter, which in its mixture of sisterly tenderness and absolute faith in the purposes of God, reveals all the strength and depth of her character. She loved her sister better than she had ever done when they were together; at the very moment of writing she was hardly able to endure the agony of suspense. Nevertheless she doubted whether it was right to ask her life of God. "I have done so," she continues, "on behalf of you and of her children; but when I recollected that God took away our deceased mother from us when we were much younger than they are, and in more critical circumstances than those which will follow this loss, and that nevertheless He has by no means forsaken us, but has deigned to testify in our persons that He is the Father of the orphan and the Consoler of the afflicted, I thought that we ought not to oppose ourselves to His commands, but to cast ourselves, with all that is dearest to us, into His arms.

"Your children are more His than ours; let us not fear lest He should abandon them, so long as we commit them to His hands. And as for you, I surely believe that if God deprives you of so great a consolation, it is to draw you wholly to Himself; for although your union may be entirely lawful, and entirely holy, there is something more perfect still; and possibly God, knowing by His divine wisdom that you would not have been disposed to listen to the inspiration which He might have given to you, to aspire to so pure a state, and to resolve to anticipate, by a holy and voluntary divorce, that hard separation, which is, sooner or later, inevitable; wishes to show you that the fictitious obstacles which self-love suggests on these occasions are removed in a moment when He pleases, and that when it is His will, we must do under

pressure of necessity, what we could not do of our own accord. . . .

"I cannot refrain from telling you, that the only wish I am able to form for any one is that it may please God to place him in a more perfect repose, and a fuller assurance in drawing him to Himself, who is the sole end towards which we move in all that we do. If it pleases Him to grant this mercy to my dear sister, rather than to us, why should we oppose ourselves to her happiness? I see no other happiness in the world than an entire retreat and a complete abandonment of all things, for the purpose of serving God alone; but even this is nothing in comparison with the bliss of possessing Him with an entire fulness and a certain assurance of never losing Him more. Let us then stifle as much as possible all the sentiments of nature which oppose themselves too strongly to those which faith and charity ought to give us upon this subject; and since all efforts and wishes are useless against the decrees of God, do with a good heart, what we must do if He has willed it." *

In another passage of this fine letter, Jacqueline desires to unite her prayers with those of her brother-in-law that they may both approve themselves wholly faithful to God in this trial. "I implore you to ask of Him this favour for me, as I ask it for you; and as I know that God is near the afflicted, and listens favourably to their prayers, I include my poor brother in the request, and beg you to do as much for him, that God may please to use this affliction to cause him to return to his better self (*ventrer dans lui-même*), and to open his eyes to the vanity of all worldly things." May we not date the new soberness of Pascal's thoughts and plans from these moments of domestic agony? Jacqueline, writing in December 1654, after her brother

* Cousin, J. P. p. 227.

had placed himself under Singlin's direction, says, that "for more than a year he had felt a great contempt of the world, and an almost insupportable disgust of the persons who are in it." * It is not easy to trace the operations of the Spirit in another's heart; "whence it cometh, or whither it goeth" is not always revealed, even to the soul upon which it works. The great crises of life often pass away without result, while some little stumbling-block of circumstance is the beginning of new things. And so, all that we can truly say of Pascal is, that soon after his sister's dangerous, yet not fatal illness, he began to turn away his face from the world.

An almost contemporary tradition ascribes to a remarkable escape from danger the first special impulse in the new direction. One fête day, probably in October or November 1654, he was driving a carriage, drawn by four or six horses, on the Pont de Neuilly. The leaders suddenly took fright, ran away, and swerving from their course at a point where no balustrade protected the road, fell into the river. The traces broke at the critical moment; and the carriage, with its occupant, remained safe upon the verge. Upon a sensitive mind, especially if already oscillating between the religious and the worldly life, such an adventure could not have been without its effect. "But it was necessary," says the compiler of the memoir in the Recueil d'Utrecht†, "that God should take away from him that vain love of science to which he had returned; and it was without doubt for this purpose that He caused him to have a vision, of which he never spoke to any one except his confessor." The word "vision" in this passage is the result of inference, not a direct statement of fact. All we know is, that after Pascal's death, a servant discovered a little parcel, carefully stitched up in his waistcoat, which

* Cousin, J. P. p. 234. † p. 258.

he had evidently worn from day to day, and sewn and unsewn when he changed his clothes. The packet contained two copies of a document in his own handwriting, one on parchment, the other on paper; plainly a record of some event or train of meditation which he wished to keep ever in remembrance. The following copy has been preserved by the pious care of Madame Périer: —

L'an de grâce, 1654.

Lundi, 23me Novembre, jour de St. Clément, Pape et Martyr, et autres au Martyrologe.

Veille de St. Chrysogone, Martyr et autres.

Depuis environ dix heures et demie du soir, jusques environ minuit et demi.

Feu.

Dieu d'Abraham, Dieu d'Isaac, Dieu de Jacob,
Non des Philosophes et des Savans.
Certitude, certitude, sentimens, vûe, joie, paix.
Dieu de Jésus Christ.
Deum meum, et Deum vestrum. Jean x. 17.
Ton Dieu sera mon Dieu. *Ruth.*
Oubli du monde et de tout hormis DIEU.
Il ne se trouve que par les voies enseignées dans l'Evangile.
Grandeur de l'ame humaine.
Père juste, le monde ne t'a point connu, mais je t'ai connu. Jean 17.
Joie, joie, pleurs de joie.
Je m'en suis séparé.
Dereliquerunt me fontem aquæ vivæ.
Mon Dieu me quitterez-vous.
Que je n'en sois point séparé éternellement.
Cette est la vie éternelle, qu'ils te connoissent seul vrai Dieu, et celui que tu as envoyé.

Jésus Christ.
Jésus Christ.
Jésus Christ.
Je m'en suis séparé. Je l'ai fui, renoncé.
Crucifié.
Que je n'en sois jamais séparé.
Dieu ne se conserve que par les voies enseignées dans l'Évangile.
Réconciliation totale et douce.
Soumission totale à Jésus Christ et à mon Directeur.
Éternellement en joie pour un jour d'exercice sur la terre.
*Non obliviscar sermones tuos. Amen.**

What judgment are we to form of this paper? Condorcet, in his edition of the "Thoughts," throws discredit upon it, after the manner of his school, by calling it "une amulette mystique," insinuating under that phrase that Pascal attached a superstitious value to the parchment, or the form of words, apart from the meaning which they convey. By and by, a shapely edifice of misrepresentation was built upon this sandy base, intended to prove that the religious fervour of Pascal's last years was the result of a disordered brain; really proving that spiritual things can only be spiritually discerned, and that the school of the Encyclopédie was blind of the inner vision of the soul. On the

* As the various copies of this singular document are not verbally the same, I have exactly reproduced that of the Recueil d'Utrecht, pp. 259, 260. M. Prosper Faugère departs from his usual accuracy in the statement (Pensées de Pascal, Introd. p. xxix., repeated, vol. i. p. 228,) that Condorcet published it for the first time. The date of Condorcet's "Éloge et Pensées de Pascal" is, according to M. Faugère himself, 1776; that of the Recueil d'Utrecht, 1740.

1st of June 1738, Voltaire, speaking of his remarks upon Pascal's "Thoughts," and the animadversions which they had called forth, had written thus to the mathematician, S'Gravesende:—* "Pascal, throughout the last years of his life, believed that he saw an abyss by the side of his chair; need we on that account have the same fancy? I, too, see an abyss, but it is in the very things which he believed that he had explained. You will find in Leibnitz's 'Miscellanies,' that, towards the end, melancholy led Pascal's intellect astray; he even says so somewhat harshly. It is not after all wonderful, that a man of delicate temperament and gloomy imagination like Pascal, should end in deranging, by bad management, the organs of his brain. Such a malady is not more surprising or more humiliating than fever or headache. For the great Pascal to be attacked by it is for Samson to lose his strength." How plain the inference! A mystic amulet—a haunting hallucination—is it to this that the discoverer of atmospheric weight, the inventor of the arithmetical machine, has fallen? If a brilliant career of scientific discovery, which seemed to promise great conquests for the kingdom of positive knowledge, has ended in entanglement in the old religious mists, what better explanation than that the fine intellect broke down, and left the philosopher a prey to superstitious fancies? But, unfortunately for this theory, the facts upon which it is founded will not bear examination. The Pascal of the "Thoughts" is he of the "Provincial Letters" and the resolution of the Cycloid, labours which give no evidence of failing powers. The story of the abyss rests upon the unsupported testimony of the Abbé Boileau,—not the brother of the poet, but a later churchman of the same name—who tells it in a volume of letters published in 1737, four years after the death of Marguerite Périer, the last of

* Œuvres, vol. lvii. p. 91.

Pascal's contemporaries. The passage in the "Leibnitziana," to which Voltaire so confidently refers, is no more than this: "In endeavouring thoroughly to investigate matters of religion, he became scrupulous even to folly." What is this but a moral judgment, which every Protestant must express in terms more or less tender, upon the austerities of Pascal's religious life? Only, it may be a half judgment, so long as it is not accompanied by a hearty recognition of the sublime conscientiousness which expended itself in these excesses; but still, from its own side, right and true.*

Other critics have endeavoured to explain the terms of this paper without recourse to the supposition of a vision, under the idea that in so doing they were protecting Pascal's memory from the reproach of superstitious credulity. M. Faugère uses the term "ravissement," which may probably be translated by "ecstasy," or "trance;" the Abbé Maynard adopts the phrase, with the addition of the words, "de prière." The line of demarcation which separates these words from "vision" is easy to define in thought, but hardly discoverable when we seek to apply it to the discrimination of facts. The first denote only a subjective, the latter, in addition, an objective phenomenon: the first place the whole scene of action within Pascal's mind, the latter supposes an appearance perceptible to his senses. Then, in order to define our notion of a vision, we must ask whether we conceive of it as something which might also have been visible to other senses than his, and the answer, in the attempt to make a fundamental distinction between the real and the phenomenal, leads us away into depths of metaphysical obscurity. There are peculiarities in the paper, such as the use of the word "feu," and the exact specification of time, which aid the theory that it is the record of what Pascal saw, as well as of what

* Conf. St^e Beuve, vol. iii. pp. 285—287.

he felt. On the other hand, may be alleged the marks of mental change and conflict which it contains, as if it were an epitome of the varying thoughts and impulses of many weeks, rather than the picture of two hours' trance or struggle. Nevertheless, the main fact is, that it records the crisis in the Divine dealing with Pascal's soul; and the single principle which it is necessary to bear in mind, that the Holy Spirit works far more frequently, and as effectually in the recesses of the soul, as through the senses. It is impossible, it would be unphilosophical if it were possible, to deny the reality of that class of spiritual facts which we call visions; the error lies in setting them apart, and limiting to them the presence of a Divine element in human affairs. With me, to suppose that on the 23rd of November, 1654, Pascal was convinced that he saw a vision of Divine truth, would not detract from the truthfulness and soberness of his mind: as I should not the less believe that God had been with him, had the spiritual struggle been accompanied by no external manifestations.

Jacqueline, in a letter to her sister, dated January 25th, 1655, gives a full account of her brother's change of purpose, but represents it as of more gradual accomplishment than we should suppose, if we concentrated our attention only upon these exceptional facts. For more than a year she had marked a difference in him; an unwonted weariness of society, and of all whom he met in it. About the end of September, she says*, "He came to see me, and at this visit opened his heart to me in a way that made me feel sorry for him; avowing that in the midst of constant occupation and surrounded by circumstances which might contribute to make him love the world, and to which we had reason to believe him much attached, he was in such sort anxious to quit them all, both on account of the ex-

* Cousin, J. P. p. 236.

treme aversion which he felt to the follies and amusements of the world, and of the constant reproaches of his conscience, as to find himself detached from everything in a way which he had never before experienced, or indeed, anything approaching to it; but that, on the other hand, he was so utterly forsaken of God, as to feel no attraction on that side; that nevertheless, he forced himself with all his might in that direction, though he was very conscious that it was rather his own intellect and spirit which roused him to what he knew to be better things, than the movement of the Spirit of God: that he believed himself to be so separated from all earthly things, as to be in a condition to undertake everything, if only he had the same sentiments towards God as before: and that at these times he must have been bound in horrible bonds to resist the grace which God gave him, and the movements which He aroused in him. This confession surprised as much as it rejoiced me, and from that time I conceived hopes such as I had never before entertained, and of which I thought that I ought to give you some tidings, in order to compel you to prayer. If I told the tale of all his other visits as particularly as this, I should need to write a volume; for from this time they were so frequent and so long, that it seemed as if I had no other work to do."

This then, was the state of mind upon which the preservation of the bridge of Neuilly came like a warning voice; which prepared the way for the mysterious experience of the 23rd of November. But it was on the 8th of December, that the final resolution was taken: the feast of the Conception of the Virgin, which long ago had witnessed Jacqueline's triumph at the Palinods de Rouen, and was now to mark the date of a greater victory. On the afternoon of that day, Pascal was in the parlour of Port Royal with his sister, when the bell sounded for nones and a sermon. They entered the church together; Singlin

was the preacher. Pascal knew that his own attendance there that day was accidental, and saw that no communication could take place between his sister and her director; yet the sermon seemed as if it had been intended for himself alone. It spoke of the beginning of the Christian life, and of the necessity of making it holy; it declared that God ought to be consulted upon every change of purpose; that modes of life should be examined with reference to the great interest of individual salvation. Jacqueline fed the flame of devotion which now burned with unwonted ardour; so that before long, her brother resolved to put himself under the guidance of some austere director, and to spend all his strength in the work of his own religious education. Who was the director to be? Jacqueline naturally suggested Singlin; but Pascal felt at first some undefined aversion to the great confessor of Port Royal; and when this was overcome, Singlin's own reluctance to accept the charge of fresh penitents stood in the way. At last the confessor, now at Port Royal des Champs, consented to give Jacqueline the needful instruction; and for a little time the brother eagerly and humbly followed the sister's guidance. Then room was found for him among the solitaries of the sacred valley, and De Saçi filled the place of Jacqueline. There all was well. He wrote to his sister that he "was lodged and treated like a prince." The early rising, the long round of service, even the fasts appeared to suit his weak health better than the rules of the physicians. "I first," writes Jacqueline to him about this time, "found out by experience that health depends more upon Jesus Christ than upon Hippocrates, and that, unless God wishes to prove and fortify us by our weakness, the regimen of the soul cures the body." His spirits rose in proportion to the improvement of his health. "I am as glad," writes his sister again, "to find you gay in solitude, as I was sorry to have you so in the world. For all that, I do not know how M. de Saçi puts up with so

light-hearted a penitent, who pretends to balance the vain joys and amusements of the world, by joys somewhat more reasonable, and by more allowable sallies, instead of expiating them with continual tears." *

But Port Royal des Champs was hardly itself when Pascal first found his way thither. The new philosophy of Des Cartes had penetrated even into these holy solitudes; Arnauld, after a brief preliminary controversy with the master, had become a zealous Cartesian, perhaps not the less zealous because the Jesuits took the side of authority and Aristotle. But we will let Fontaine tell his own story in a more lively passage than often relieves the pious monotony of his pages: †

"How many little agitations raised themselves in this desert touching the human science of philosophy, and the new opinions of M. Des Cartes! As M. Arnauld in his hours of relaxation conversed on these subjects with his more intimate friends, the infection insensibly spread on every side; and the solitude, in the hours devoted to social intercourse, resounded only with these discussions. There was hardly a solitary who did not talk of 'automata.' To beat a dog was no longer a matter of any consequence. The stick was laid on with the utmost indifference, and those who pitied the animals, as if they had any feeling, were laughed at. They said that they were only clockwork, and that the cries they uttered when they were beaten, were no more than the noise of some little spring that had been moved — and that all this involved no sensation. They nailed the poor animals to boards by the four paws to dissect them while still alive, in order to watch the circulation of the blood, which was a great sub-

* Cousin, J. P. pp. 237—245. Marg. Périer, ap. Faugère, J. P. p. 453. Rec. d'Utrecht, p. 261, *et seq.*

† Mém. vol. iii. p. 74.

ject of discussion. The château of M. le Duc de Luynes was the source of all these curious affairs — a source that was inexhaustible. There all ceaselessly talked about and admired the new system of the world, according to M. Des Cartes; but you could never see M. de Saçi enter upon these curious speculations. 'What new idea of the grandeur of God does it give me,' he said, 'to come and tell me that the sun is a heap of shreds (*amas de rognures*) and that animals are clockwork?' And then, smiling gently when they talked to him of these matters, he showed more pity for those who occupied themselves with them, than desire to investigate them himself."

The situation was characteristic. Arnauld's singularly wide and versatile intellect had not suffered this great crisis of philosophical thought to pass by unmarked; in the midst of his professional duties and controversies, he had found time to examine the new philosophy; after a period of hesitation he had enrolled himself as a follower of Des Cartes, and was about, in the Port Royal Logic, to apply and develop the system. De Saçi, no more than a theologian, and concerned even with theology in none but its practical aspects, seized only upon the accidents, the excrescences of Cartesianism; was indignant with the new theory of animal life; thought that Des Cartes' doctrine of the universe emptied it of all power of religious instruction; and welcomed the new philosophy, if at all, because it made reprisals upon the authority of Aristotle, whom theologians had long elevated to an unnatural equality with the Bible and St. Augustine. It was then, into this divided society, that Pascal was sent, "that M. Arnauld" as Fontaine naively says* "might cope with him (*lui preteroit le collet*) in all that regarded the sciences, and that M. de Saçi might teach him to despise them." It needs no great

* Mém. iii. p. 78.

knowledge of human nature to prophesy the result. Pascal was flying from the world to God; presently, when we look at his "Thoughts" we shall see that with him this meant no less than taking refuge in faith from the incompleteness of science, and the uncertainty of philosophy. Singlin and De Saçi conquered Des Cartes and Arnauld. The new solitary threw all the ardour of his nature into his self-mortification; so that before long, Jacqueline wrote to remind him that neglect of personal cleanliness is not a necessary accompaniment of perfect holiness.*

At this point the biography of Blaise and Jacqueline Pascal almost merges in the history of Port Royal, and I have no choice but to refer my readers to previous pages, or to repeat a tale already told. It was in December, 1654, that Pascal retired to Port Royal des Champs; at the beginning of 1655 that the Duc de Liancourt was refused absolution at St. Sulpice; at the end of that year that Arnauld's "Second Letter to a Duke and Peer" was examined by the Sorbonne; and on the 23rd of January, 1656, that the first "Provincial Letter" was published. From this time Pascal seems to have lived chiefly in Paris. He came thither to superintend the printing of the "Letters," apparently *before* the voluntary dispersion of the solitaries in March, 1656, and did not return with them to Port Royal during the temporary respite obtained for the community by the miracle of the Holy Thorn. The deep impression which that singular event made upon him and Jacqueline I have already recorded, and shall again refer to when it is necessary to speak of the origin and literary history of the "Thoughts." No sooner were the "Provincial Letters," and the subsequent controversy between the Curés and the Jesuits brought to an end, than the miracle seemed to fill all his thoughts, and for a year he

* Cousin, J. P. p. 246.

busied himself in laying the foundation of an elaborate work on the evidences of religion. Then his maladies returned with redoubled force, and the four years before his death, in 1662, were one long languishing.

The first form taken by Pascal's renewed illness, was a violent toothache, which altogether deprived him of sleep. One night, early in the year 1658, as he lay awake distracted with pain, his mind reverted to old pursuits, and he began to reflect upon the properties of the Cycloid, a curve which had long been a fertile source of difficulty and contention to geometers. One happy thought succeeded another; the problem was solved, the toothache it is to be hoped, at least forgotten, and in eight days the whole investigation reduced to mathematical form and order. There Pascal himself was willing to have left the matter; but the Duc de Roannez, jealous for the reputation of his friend, and anxious to prove that Catholic piety was not incompatible with the successful pursuit of science, persuaded him to issue a series of problems, and to offer a prize for their solution within a given time. Accordingly, in June 1658, Pascal, under the name of Amos Dettonville (an anagram of his old pseudonym, Louis de Montalte), published his "Questions."* The answers were to be sent to

* I may introduce in this place a contribution to the elucidation of the "Thoughts." In Art. VII. No. 17 (Havet, p. 108) Pascal speaks of a certain Salomon de Tultie as a writer whom he places by the side of Epictetus and Montaigne. The passage has greatly puzzled the critics. Who could this unknown person be, whom Pascal, a man of scanty erudition, thinks worthy of being named in such good company? M. Faugère says, "Nos recherches, et celles de plusieurs érudits n'ayant pu nous procurer aucune notion sur Salomon de Tultie, nous supposons que Mad. Périer, de la main de laquelle ce passage se trouve écrit dans le manuscrit, aura altéré le nom de l'écrivain cité par Pascal." M. Havet, in rejecting this hypothesis, goes on to say, "On serait tenté de croire que Salomon de Tultie n'est qu'un pseudonyme, un ami de Pascal, par exemple, qui lui avait soumis quelque recueil de pensées, ou Pascal avait remarqué celle qu'il cite. Ou qui sait si ce n'est pas lui-même que Pascal désigne ainsi?" M. Havet trembles upon the verge

his father's old friend, the mathematician Carcavi, before the 1st of October; the first in point of date was to receive a prize of forty, the second of twenty pistoles. If before the appointed time no correct answer was sent in, Pascal engaged to publish his own solutions.

The Cycloid is the curve generated by a point in the circumference of a circle, which makes a single complete revolution along a horizontal base. The learned historian of the mathematical sciences, Montucla, calls it the Helen of geometers; so numerous and tangled were the controversies to which it gave rise, both before and after the publication of Pascal's "Questions." Its very discovery is a matter of dispute, and the honour of having solved the first problems which presented themselves in relation to it was hotly contested by French and Italian mathematicians. Des Cartes and Roberval quarrelled about it, as about everything else; and Torricelli was accused, unjustly as it appears, of having stolen his method of determining its area and tangents. Into so perplexed a matter it is not for us to penetrate; it is enough to say that Pascal impeached the accuracy or the completeness of all the answers sent to him, and ended by publishing his own, in a treatise which entered not only into the properties, but the history of the famous curve. Christopher Wren and Wallis were among the English competitors for the prize, and the latter did not hesitate to declare that he had been unfairly treated. Another competitor, Père Lalouère, a Jesuit of Toulouse, was more energetic in his remonstrances than Wallis; but the public was accustomed to take part with Pascal against the Jesuits, and did not fail him this time. Leibnitz* decides that both Wallis and Lalouère had

of the truth. The curious reader will find that Salomon de Tultie is only an anagram of Louis de Montalte, the author of the Provincial Letters, and of Amos Dettonville, the proposer of the problems of the Cycloid.

* Quoted by Maynard, vol. i. p. 241.

solved the problem, but then neither of them published his treatise on the Cycloid till after the appearance of Pascal's. Perhaps the end of the whole matter was not so much to prove the thesis which the Duc de Roannez had in his mind, as to show that ascetics take up their old passions when once more they enter the world's struggles; and that the purity of the monastic life is due rather to the absence of temptation than to the vigour and discipline of the moral nature. To turn from the pages in which Madame Périer describes her brother's life during these last years, to the volume of his works which is almost wholly occupied by the controversy of the Cycloid, is sufficient to prove that no eagerness of austerity could smother the fire of intellectual emulation in Pascal's soul, no spiritual affections bar the access to his heart of the old love of abstract truth.*

The glimpses which we catch of Pascal during the last four years of his life are but few; nearly all our knowledge is drawn from his sister's affectionate record. In August, 1660, he is at Clermont, and writes to Fermat with an apology for not hastening to meet him as had been proposed. "He cannot walk without a stick, or hold himself on horseback; three leagues, or four at most, is a day's journey in a vehicle; it has taken him twenty-two days to come from Paris into Auvergne."† Then we have seen how, at the end of 1661, he took up a bolder position even than Arnauld in regard to the Formulary, and discarding the distinction between "fait" and "droit," which he had defended in the "Provincial Letters," insisted that any form of signature should reserve not only the orthodoxy of the Augustinus, but the true doctrine of grace. So in like manner we have already conducted Jacqueline to the end

* Montucla, vol. ii. p. 65, *et seq.* Maynard, vol. i. p. 224, *et seq.*
† St^e Beuve, vol. iii. p. 245.

of her career, in October, 1661. The cure of her niece, the perils of the convent, the necessity of signature; her duties, first as mistress of the novices, and then as sub-prioress of Port Royal des Champs, — these things were her life during the seven years which remained after her brother's conversion. A few letters, which, except those already quoted, have but little interest; an enthusiastic poem on the Miracle; a code of regulations for the children who were being educated at Port Royal, and her last sublime letter of grief and protest, are all that now remain to break the silence of that conventual secrecy in which her life was hidden. Pascal, falling lifeless to the ground, when he saw, as he thought, the truth betrayed by those to whom God had entrusted its defence; Jacqueline slowly dying in the cloisters of Port Royal, of remorse for having unwittingly aided in the treachery—do not these things reveal to us a diviner strength, and a higher possibility of attainment, than even the powers which compelled wheels of wood and iron to do the work of human brains, and tracked the secret of the Cycloid in a single sleepless night?

The last years of Pascal's life were passed in rigid self-mortification. He resolved to "renounce every pleasure and every superfluity." He dispensed, as far as possible, with all attendance, requiring others to perform for him only those services which he could not perform for himself. He reduced the furniture of his room to the standard prescribed by bare necessity. He accustomed himself to eat so carelessly, as to be ignorant of the composition of his meal; although, on account of his delicate digestion, there were but few kinds of food which his stomach would retain. Savoury meats or nauseous medicine he accepted with the same indifference; either must necessarily be taken, and that was all. His whole time was spent in prayer and in reading the Scriptures, of which he acquired so accurate a knowledge, as to be able at once to name the chapter from

which any given text was taken. The hundred and nineteenth Psalm was an especial favourite with him; he could not talk of it without rapturous admiration. After the aggravation of his illness had compelled him to postpone or abandon the execution of his great work, he spent much of his time in going from church to church, according to a register which he had compiled of the special services in each. Many persons resorted to him either for practical religious advice, or for the resolution of their theological doubts; but he regarded even such intercourse with the world as this as a possible snare. After his death, it was discovered that he had worn next his skin an iron girdle, studded with spikes, which he was wont to press close with his elbow, whenever some real or fancied temptation presented itself in the midst of this pious discourse.

But this was not all; he aimed at fixing himself in an unnatural, perhaps impossible isolation from all human affections. They were but so many weaknesses of the flesh; shackles which the strong runner for God would cast away from his feet. He rebuked Madame Périer for allowing her children to caress her; true love could be shown in a thousand better ways. Jacqueline had more than once to assure her sister, that the brother who received all her kindnesses so coldly really loved her as well as heart could desire. When Madame Périer proposed to marry her youngest daughter, and a suitable match presented itself, Pascal protested against the marriage in a letter which is almost savage in its fanaticism. "The married state is no better than paganism in the eyes of God; to contrive this poor child's marriage is a kind of homicide, nay, Deicide, in her person."* So at Jacqueline's death, he sternly shut up his grief in his own heart, and had not even a word of sympathy for his sister's sorrow. "God give us grace to die

* Pensées, ed. Faugère, vol. i. p. 56.

as good a death," was all he said; and rebuked Gilberte's tears with the declaration that the death of the just was no subject for lamentation, and that they ought to thank God, that He had so recompensed their sister for the trifling service which she had rendered to Him. "It is wrong," he wrote in the "Thoughts," * "that any one should attach himself to me, even though it be done voluntarily, and with pleasure. I must deceive those in whom I awaken this desire, for I am not the final end of any being, and have not wherewith to satisfy any. Am I not about to die? Thus, then, the object of their attachment would perish. In the same way as I should do wrong to give currency to a falsehood, although I persuaded men gently, and it was believed with pleasure, and so gave pleasure to me too—I do wrong to make myself beloved, and to attract persons to attach themselves to me. Whatever advantage may result to me, I ought to warn those who are about to assent to a falsehood, not to believe it; and in the same way not to attach themselves to me, in as much as they ought to give their life and strength to please God, and to seek after Him."

But it is hardly possible that ny form of Christianity, how imperfect or distorted soever, should not include some social duty; and so Pascal expelled personal love from his heart, to enthrone general philanthropy in its place. He begins a sort of confession of faith with the words "I love all men as my brethren, because they are all ransomed. I love poverty because Jesus Christ loved it. I love wealth because it gives me the means of assisting the wretched."† Few men have more consistently carried out these principles. We have already seen how in the last year of his life he mortgaged his expected profits from the *carosses à cinq sols* for the benefit of the poor of Blois. Although

* Pensées, ed. Havet, p. 324.

† Ibid. p. 343.

his infirmities compelled him year by year to exceed his income, he never refused an alms. "I have noticed that however poor one is, something is always left behind when one dies," was his answer to remonstrance on this head. He exhorted his sister to devote herself and her children to the work of ministering to the poor; no religious discipline could be better than familiarity with misery and privation. And this should be done by every one according to their several ability; "to serve the poor, poorly, was most agreeable to God;" the foundation of hospitals was not every man's work, like the daily and private assistance of the indigent. One instance of his charity, which occurred about three months before his death, Madame Périer must tell in her own words; "As he was returning one day from mass at St. Sulpice, there met him a young girl, about fifteen years of age, and very beautiful, who asked an alms. Being touched to see this person exposed to so manifest a danger, he asked her who she was, and what obliged her thus to ask alms; and having learned that she was from the country, that her father was dead, and that her mother, having fallen ill, had been taken to the Hôtel Dieu that very day, he thought that God had sent her to him as soon as she was in want; so that without any delay he took her to the Seminary, and put her into the hands of a good priest to whom he gave money and whom he begged to take care of her, and to place her in some situation, where, on account of her youth, she might have good advice and be safe. And to assist him in this care, he said that he would send next day a woman to buy clothes for her, and all that might be necessary to enable her to go to service. The next day he sent a woman who worked so well with this good priest, that after having clothed her, they placed her in a good situation. And this ecclesiastic having asked of the woman the name of him who was doing this charitable act, she

said that she was not empowered to tell it, but that she would come from time to time to see him, and to provide for the wants of the girl. And he begged her to obtain permission to reveal the name, saying, 'I promise you that I will never speak of it as long as he lives; but if it should be God's will that he dies before me, it would console me to make this action known; for I think it so noble, that I cannot suffer it to remain in obscurity.'" *

What are we to say of these latter years of Pascal's life? I have described them as I find them described by his sister; the story, so far without comment, lies under the reader's eye. Hardly in the prime of life, and yet at the very point of death; with intellectual powers capable of any achievement, yet crippled by unremitting bodily torment; exorcising doubt by arguments which lend a majesty to ecclesiastical authority, and yet rebelling against the Church, to fulfil a higher allegiance to truth; with a heart made for love, and household angels, such as fall to few men's share, turning his back upon all affections but the holiest, and in comparison with that, heaping fierce depreciation upon every other; spying a danger to purity in a child's caress, and paganism in faithful wedlock; having fled from the world to avoid temptation, yet needing the help of a spiked girdle to overcome it—what ideal is this of the Christian life? We are not allowed to find the key to the mystery in Pascal's infirmities, which prevented the devotion to theological, of the powers which he had withdrawn from scientific study. "Sickness," he said in his last illness, "is the Christian's natural state; for it places us in the condition in which we ought always to be; suffering evil, deprived of all the goods and all the pleasures of sense, exempt from all the passions which are busy during the whole course of life; without ambition,

* Mad. Périer, ap. Faugère, J. P. p. 29.

without avarice; in the constant expectation of death. Is it not thus that Christians ought to pass life?" And yet, what would become of the world, if all Christians did thus pass their lives?

To what a height of moral grandeur does not this last struggle after perfectness raise itself? We lose sight at first of all but the divine strength of will, the ardour and constancy of self-sacrifice, the upward rush of aspiration, which enable a human life so to deprive itself of all earthly delights, that it may find its single, all-sufficient delight in God. In Pascal, at least, there is no reason to doubt the purity of the motive; no wild remorse for a profligacy as wild, drove him to solitude and self-maceration; no popular renown for sanctity rewarded his past, or spurred him to fresh austerity. His mode of life was deliberately adopted as that which alone became a Christian man; and its very obscurity was a necessary constituent of its worth. And men to whom virtue comes in winning guise, and brings her own charms with her in home pleasures, and innocent recreations of art and literature and society, wonder, not without awe, at the fortitude which cuts away all these things from life, as possible occasions of sin, and is content to live and die, deprived of every gift of God, save the gift of Himself. So, not seldom, we are blinded to the real proportion of things; as the crag that rises riven and bare in one clear sweep from our feet, impresses us with its height more than the loftier hill which swells gently from the plain, and is corn-covered to the top. Is then the ascetic's life the hardest? Not so thought St. Cyran, when he doubted whether even D'Andilly could make his peace with God in the world; he would have his friend fly to the desert, as the less arduous post in life's battle. To live a holy life by shunning temptation, and by conquering it, are not the same thing; and this, the Protestant, not that, the Catholic ideal is the noblest.

I cannot pause, nor is it necessary, to develop the arguments which make against the monastic theory, of which Pascal's latter years were no more than a practical exaggeration. When first I began to write this story, it was necessary to learn to move and think within the limits of monasticism; to accept it as a fact which could not be fully understood by one who watchfully kept the attitude of suspicion and attack. And now the cry of protest which I cannot but utter, is not against Pascal, still less against Port Royal, but against the whole theory of life, which is involved in the monastic system, and not always repudiated by Protestants of the purest blood. The doctrine of Port Royal only informs that theory with a religiousness not necessarily its own: the eager strength of Pascal's character pushed it to its farthest logical extreme. It is a theory which, by concentrating the undivided attention of the soul upon the conditions of existence in another life, makes it deaf to the demands of love and duty in this. The question which its votary asks himself is not, How can I best fill my place *here?* but, In what way shall I most certainly insure my safety *there?* So, as it is part of the world's moral constitution, that opportunities of duty should be also possible occasions of sin; that there should be a point at which innocent enjoyments cease to be innocent, and domestic affections traverse the course of a higher duty; this theory bids men apply themselves to win heaven, by evading the problem of earth: and for very dread of sin, to turn their backs upon the possibility of virtue. I say nothing of the inherent selfishness of such a view of life; of the way in which it turns inward upon himself, and his spiritual state, all a man's thought and striving, and roots up the faculty of unconscious affection, and natural enjoyment. One thought sufficiently condemns it; that the highest type of human life cannot be such as, realised in all men, would make the world a howling wilderness. It seems

to me that Pascal, feeling the love of God on his life in the love of wife and children; pressing on with swift step into the mysteries of the physical universe; striving too (there is nothing inconsistent in the double task) to strengthen the defences of revealed religion, and presenting the example of one more faithful and God-fearing life to the foul license of court and city, might have learned secrets of Divine wisdom and human possibility, of which the recluse of Port Royal, the haunter of Parisian churches, must have remained ignorant.

And yet the image of the poor girl rescued from the pavement of the wicked city, and of many another wretched one who owed to that kind hand some brief respite from wretchedness, rises up to rebuke our judgment. Let us turn to the brief story of his death.

We have already seen that the last four years of Pascal's life were no more than one unremitting struggle against the maladies of his youth, which had returned with redoubled force, and were probably aggravated by his unnatural mode of living. The fatal illness began in June 1662, with a disgust of all food, followed in a few days by a very violent colic. He needed his sister's help, yet was in danger of being deprived of it; for a child, one of a large family, to whom from motives of compassion he gave an asylum in his house, being ill of small-pox, he would neither suffer the little patient to be removed, nor expose his sister to the risk of carrying the infection to her own children. 'The least danger,' he said, 'would be in his own removal;' and so, forgetful of himself to the last, was carried to his sister's house, Rue Neuve St. Étienne. Here he lingered for nearly two months; now shaking off the disease for a time, and now yielding to its renewed attacks, but always persuaded, in opposition to the opinion of his physicians, that the end was not far off. The friends of Port Royal, from whom his difference of judgment had involved no estrange-

ment of heart, were often with him; he confessed not only to the Curé of the parish, but to Ste Marthe, one of the directors of the community. His last wish, which his sister, however, did not think fit to gratify, was that he might be carried to the Hospital of Incurables, to die among the poor. For a few hours before his death he was insensible, but a brief interval of restored consciousness and freedom from pain enabled him to receive the last sacraments of the Church. He died on the 19th of August 1662, having just completed his thirty-ninth year, and was buried in the church of St. Étienne du Mont.*

To believe that Pascal died in the conviction that the resistance of Port Royal to the Formulary had been a mistake and a sin, and that after all Père Annat, and M. de Perefixe were on the right side, must have been a hard trial even to Jesuit credulity. Yet such a story was sedulously propagated. M. Beurrier, the Curé of St. Étienne du Mont, had visited Pascal on his death-bed, and had administered to him the sacraments of communion and extreme unction. Two years and a half after Pascal's death,

* For details of Pascal's later life, see Mad. Périer, ap. Faugère, J. P. pp. 16—45.

A singular story, apparently without much historical foundation, has been published by Michelet; Histoire de la Révolution Française (vol. i. p. 77, quoted by Ste Beuve, vol. iii. p. 293). Madame de Genlis told some nameless person that the Duke of Orleans, being much engaged in processes of alchemy about the year 1789, needed a skeleton for some mysterious purpose, and that the bones of Pascal were disturbed from their resting-place, and brought to him. Parallel with this, is another wonderful tale which I have not thought it worth while to quote from Marguerite Périer's memoirs; that at a year old, Blaise Pascal was struck by a mysterious illness, the result of witchcraft; and that the grave and learned Étienne Pascal was not ashamed to have recourse to a wise woman, who succeeded, by powerful charms, in diverting the spell to an unlucky cat, whose death was the signal for the child's recovery. M. Pascal's scientific acquirements may not, in that age, have elevated him above such vulgar superstition; but the tale agrees ill with his well-known devotion to the Church. Those who wish to learn the strange details will find them in Faugère, Jacq. Pascal, p. 447.

in the very heat of the persecution of the nuns, the Archbishop of Paris sent for M. Beurrier, and asked him whether Pascal had not died without the sacraments. When the Curé replied that he had himself administered them to the dying man, the Archbishop angrily inquired how he had dared to give them to so notorious a Jansenist. M. Beurrier, in a fright, bethought himself of some alienation from Arnauld on the subject of the Formulary, of which Pascal had spoken, and interpreting the fact to suit his present need, told M. de Perefixe that his penitent had blamed the friends of Port Royal for their obstinate resistance to the ecclesiastical authorities. Such a story was too good to be lost; the Archbishop at once put it into the form of a declaration, and compelled the half-reluctant Curé to sign it. A year after, Père Annat published the statement in one of his controversial pamphlets, and under pretence of doing justice to Pascal, inflicted what his friends felt to be a grievous wound upon his memory. The matter was at once explained: the cause of Pascal's difference with Arnauld was shown to be his more ardent, not his failing Jansenism, and M. Beurrier acknowledged his mistake. But the declaration still remained in the Archbishop's hands, and the Curé was too timid, at the moment when the cause of Port Royal seemed irretrievably lost, to brave the displeasure of his superior. Again, when the "Thoughts" were published at the beginning of 1670, the Archbishop, in the first fervour of reconciliation with Port Royal, said many polite things of the book, and proposed to the publisher to prefix, at least to the second edition, a document, which so signally redounded to the orthodox credit of the author. Fresh explanations were made, new affidavits signed, when at last the death of M. de Perefixe in 1671 took the seal from the Curé's lips, and the mistake was promptly and authoritatively corrected.*

* Mad. Périer, ap. Faugère, J. P. p. 87. Rec. d'Utrecht, p. 347, *et seq.*

Before we attempt to form a general estimate of Pascal's mind and character, it is necessary to become acquainted with his posthumous work, the "Thoughts." The singular fortunes of this celebrated book compel me to speak at some length of its literary history.

The miracle of the Holy Thorn was the occasion of the "Thoughts." The event impressed itself deeply upon the mind of Pascal, then in the first glow of religious fervour. Such a cure performed upon his niece and god-daughter presented itself in the light of a special mercy vouchsafed by God upon himself. I have before told * how he thenceforward adopted as his armorial bearings an eye, surrounded by a crown of thorns, with the motto "*Scio cui credidi;*" and have quoted passages from the new recension of the "Thoughts" to show the argumentative use which he made of the miracle. From considerations on the place and function of miracles in religious evidence, he passed to the larger question, and set to work, to use the words of Madame Périer †, "to refute the principal and most false reasonings of the atheists." The last year in which he was able to work continuously, was devoted to the new scheme, in the execution of which he expended all his wonted ardour; then, for three years more, he was able only to write or dictate brief memoranda at intervals of relief from pain. When after his death, his friends jealously collected his papers, they found no partially finished treatise, not even the plan or outline of such, but a confused mass of fragments. None were of any considerable length, many consisted of only a word or two; some were carefully elaborated in form, others were written in a kind of mental short-hand, designed rather to recall than to express a train of thought. These were the materials which Port Royal and the family of Pascal undertook to edit.

* Vol. i. p. 308. † Faugère, J. P. p. 19.

The task, both from the fragmentary condition of Pascal's notes, and the state of ecclesiastical affairs, was one of extreme difficulty. The Duc de Roannez was conspicuous among the editors by his zeal; Étienne Périer, the eldest son of Gilberte Pascal, represented the feelings of his family. Besides these, Arnauld, Nicole, Treville, Du Bois, and De la Chaise, are mentioned as forming a committee of supervision. The first two are already well known to us; MM. du Bois and de la Chaise belong to the rank and file of the Jansenist army, and will disappear into obscurity when they have done this work. M. de Treville was a gentleman of Béarn, who had been brought up with Louis XIV., and had acquired a degree of scholarship which in a subaltern of the royal guards excited much wonder. About 1666 he became one of Madame de Longueville's coterie, and took a share in the revision of De Saçi's "New Testament;" but his "conversion" was publicly announced only after the sudden and frightful death of Henrietta Stuart, Duchess of Orleans, in 1670, of which he was a witness. Then for a time he formed one more link between Port Royal and the fashionable society of the day; on the one hand engaging in all the secret deliberations of the Jansenists, on the other, not forfeiting by any monastic retreat, or notable austerity, his place in the salons of Paris. His conversation was esteemed the perfection of polite intercourse, and from his judgment in matters of taste there was no appeal. He was one of those men who impress their contemporaries with a great sense of ability, yet who from fear of falling below their reputation, or indolence, or a secret consciousness of inferior powers, are careful not to run the risks of authorship. After some ten or twelve years the man of taste conquered the Jansenist; he began, says St. Simon, "to make verses, to give *recherché* dinners" — in short, to bring to bear upon the world the refinement which had been all but thrown away at Port Royal. But

Port Royal never wholly lost its hold upon any heart which it had once possessed, and after many vibrations between society and the cloister, Treville died a penitent at last.*

An active negotiator in this matter, if not himself an editor, was the Comte de Brienne, an eccentric, changeful man, the vicissitudes of whose career can only be accounted for on the supposition of partial insanity. He was the son of Lomenie, Comte de Brienne, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs during the minority of Louis XIV., and was himself, from a very early age, destined to the highest employments. He married the daughter of M. de Chavigni, another minister of the Regency, and at the age of twenty-three succeeded to his father's office. But the death of his wife, or, as others hint, a less creditable cause, developed the latent insanity of his blood; he resigned his post, retired to the Oratory, and in due time took orders. Of this he soon repented, but in vain; he could not rid himself of the sacerdotal character, and all his efforts to reinstate himself in his old office were fruitless. Henceforward his whole life was a succession of escapades, more or less befitting the priestly character, which sat sometimes heavily, sometimes lightly upon his shoulders. In 1664, Madame de Longueville, who was his godmother, brought him into relations with Port Royal, and for a time he was an ardent Jansenist. With Lancelot he made a pious pilgrimage to Alet, the diocese of the good Pavillon. In 1667 he contracted an intimate friendship with the Périer family at Clermont. But one by one the Jansenist leaders learned to mistrust his eccentric zeal; and a year after the publication of the "Thoughts," Lancelot writes to M. Périer, that M. de Brienne's friends "are in despair and are devising some means of placing him in confinement." The last eighteen years of his life were passed in the madhouse

* St^e Beuve, vol. iv. p. 474, *et seq.* St. Simon, Mém. vol. vii. p. 222.

of St. Lazare, and his only son, in whom an illustrious family became extinct, died childless and insane.*

At the time of which we are now speaking, Brienne's friendship for Madame Périer and his zeal for Port Royal were alike warm. From two still extant letters, which he wrote to Madame Périer in September and November 1668, we gain some little insight into the editorial councils. How was the work to be done? The omission of such passages as referred to the Society of Jesus, or to the controversy of the Formulary, was a manifest necessity: to publish them would be to endanger the peace of the Church. Other thoughts were in too fragmentary a state; others again, perhaps from their incompleteness, appeared unedifying, even dangerous. But when such needful omissions had been made, Madame Périer desired that the volume should contain nothing that was not from her brother's hand, and in the form in which he had left it. She heard with alarm of alterations, transpositions, explanations, embellishments. She fancied that M. de Roannez's work upon Pascal's notes amounted to "a great commentary." In answer to all this, M. de Brienne assures her, with anxious reiteration, that nothing has been done which was not absolutely necessary, which she, and Pascal himself, were he living, would not approve. Nothing has been added; nothing changed. The readers of the book will be fully informed in the preface, as she wishes, of the exact nature of the materials with which the editors have had to deal, and of the fact that their work has been simply one of arrangement. After all, the proposed preface did not fulfil these promises, and M. and Madame Périer insisted on the substitution in its place of one written by their son. The book, a little duodecimo volume, was published in January 1670, bearing upon its title-page the apt Virgilian motto, "*Pendent opera interrupta.*" †

* Ste Beuve, vol. iv. p. 415, *et seq.* St. Simon, Mém. vol. xii. p. 160.

† Rec. d'Utrecht, p. 354. For Brienne's Letters, see Pensées, ed. Fau-

The perils of the book began with its birth. It was customary that all theological works should before publication receive testimonies to their orthodoxy from men of learning and repute. Pascal's "Thoughts" appeared with nine such testimonies, signed by three bishops, one archdeacon, and thirteen doctors of the Sorbonne; among whom were Choiseul, Bishop of Comminges, and the Abbé le Camus, afterwards Bishop of Grenoble, and Cardinal. When the volume was about to be issued, M. de Perefixe sent to the bookseller, Desprez, to ask for a copy, and to interdict the sale until it had undergone his inspection. After consultation with Arnauld and others, Desprez himself took the book to the Archbishop; resolved, though complaisant thus far, to resist any ecclesiastical encroachment upon the liberty of the press. The Archbishop had heard that the work had a taint of Jansenism in it; M. Desprez fell back upon the character of the examiners. Why had he not submitted it for approval to the Professors of the University? Those learned gentlemen, said the bookseller, were so busy that they often kept a book six months without giving their opinion; a man might as well shut up his shop as wait for them. The Archbishop thought it very hard, and his almoner dutifully agreed with him, that books should be published in his diocese without his permission; but as the law was against him, he confined himself to a promise that he would consider the matter. He tried to coax Desprez into publishing the declaration of Pascal's altered opinions, of which we have already spoken, by declaring that he was all but ready to add his own signature to those of the other examiners. The cautious bookseller thanked his Grandeur, but said nothing of the declaration; and so the interview ended. The Archbishop's death,

gère, vol. i. p. 390. Letter of Mad. Périer to Mad. de Sablé, St^e Beuve, vol. iii. p. 306.

not many months afterwards, probably prevented any further proceedings.*

A second edition was published in the course of the same year, and a third in 1671, both reprints of the first. A fourth followed in 1678, "augmented," as the title-page bears, "by many thoughts of the same author," and also by three dissertations of no great value from the pen of M. du Bois. With this edition it was originally intended to publish the Life of Pascal by his sister, which had been written as far back as the year 1667. But the time had not yet come to tell the whole truth about Pascal. The story of the "Provincial Letters" might give the Jesuits the occasion of attack, for which they were anxiously waiting. It would be a wrong to Pascal's memory not to deny the reality of his pretended recantation, while to do so would probably cause the suppression of the book. The publication of the Life was accordingly postponed till the edition of 1678 was reprinted in 1687. Even then — and in the form in which we now have it — it makes no allusion either to the "Provincial Letters" or to Port Royal; and the student who derived his whole knowledge of Pascal from Madame Périer's biography would be ignorant of his relations to both.

It is not necessary to enumerate the various reprints of this edition, which were published at Paris and elsewhere. The work retained the same shape till, in 1727, the Bishop of Montpellier took occasion, in a letter to M. de Soissons, to give some hitherto inedited thoughts of Pascal on miracles. In 1728, Père Desmolets, librarian of the Oratory at Paris, included in his "Mémoires de littérature et d'histoire" several new fragments. One was a dialogue between Pascal and De Saçi on the study of Epictetus and Montaigne, which he had extracted, without however giving his authority, from Fontaine's still unprinted memoirs. The others were taken

* Recueil d'Utrecht, p. 356, *et seq.*

from the papers of Pascal's nephew, the Abbé Périer, and included essays of some length on "Self-love" and the "Art of Persuasion." On each of these occasions Marguerite Périer, still, in extreme old age, the faithful guardian of her uncle's reputation, asked for evidence that the fragments newly published were really his. The required proof was given, and the additional materials remained for the first critical editor.

The next period through which the "Thoughts" passed was one of controversy. It is true that in 1733 the Archbishop of Embrun had raised a cry of objection, and Père Hardouin, in his "Athei detecti," had placed Pascal among a goodly company of hitherto reputed Christians. But the first serious opposition came from Voltaire, and was contained in certain "Remarks upon Pascal's Thoughts," published with his Philosophical Letters in 1734.* It is needless to say that Pascal's whole object and plan were distasteful to him; that he looked upon him as a servant of true and sound knowledge, whom the old superstition had seduced from his duty, and imprisoned in perpetual uselessness. That Port Royal should have inspired the "Provincial Letters" was well enough, but it was simply melancholy that such fine powers should have been wasted upon the evidences of Christianity. Nevertheless, though Voltaire in his correspondence about this date shows that he heartily despises the whole of Pascal's theory of miracle and prophecy, he confines his attack to the doctrine of human nature contained in the "Thoughts." He was not yet the Voltaire of later years; this was his first essay in philosophical criticism, and men wondered to see the author of "Zaire" and the "Henriade" enter upon so strange a controversy. He found sufficient matter of dispute in Pascal's

* The statement in the text is that of M. Ste Beuve (P. R. vol. iii. p. 315). In the edition of Voltaire's works, from which I have quoted, the Remarks are dated 1738.

exaggerated statement of human corruption and depravity; and for a time, the battle raged only about that position. It is singular that no French Catholic divine was willing or able to take up Pascal's cause; Voltaire's only opponent was a Huguenot refugee of Utrecht, M. Boullier.

The next edition of the "Thoughts" proceeded from the school of Voltaire. In 1776 Condorcet published "Éloge et Pensées de Pascal," adding one or two yet unknown fragments; and in 1778, Voltaire, who died the same year, reprinted it, with a few introductory remarks, in which a comparison is drawn between Pascal and Condorcet, very much to the advantage of the latter. The thirty years which have passed since the publication of Voltaire's "Remarks," have not been without their influence. He has no scruples now about attacking Christianity; Jesuit, Jansenist, Calvinist, are abused with savage impartiality. Why either Condorcet or Voltaire should have troubled themselves to edit Pascal is not easy to say. Neither suppression nor annotation could transform him into a disciple of their school.

The "Thoughts" received the form in which they remained up to our own day, in the edition of Pascal's whole works, in 5 vols. 8vo. published in 1779, by the Abbé Bossut. It is a singular illustration of the virulence of the Jansenist controversy, that though the debate had long ago subsided, and the Jesuits had been banished from France for nearly twenty years, M. de Malesherbes, the minister to whose department the matter belonged, hesitated to authorise the edition, and advised that it should bear the impress of a foreign printer. The advice was taken, and the edition, which was really published in Paris by Nyon, purports to come from the establishment of Detune, at the Hague. It gathered together the various fragments which had successively appeared, and added one or two others; among them the "Discourses on the Condition of the

Great," extracted from Nicole's "Treatise on the Education of a Prince." But with this exception, Bossut did not refer to the authority upon which these additions were made, and arbitrarily divided the "Thoughts" into two parts, one containing those immediately relating to religion; the other those which refer to philosophy, morals, and belles lettres. Such as it was, Bossut's became the model of subsequent editions. The most important of these is that of Lefèvre, which also includes Pascal's whole works, and was published in 1819. An isolated effort of amendment was made in 1835, by M. Frantin, who issued at Dijon, "The 'Thoughts' of Blaise Pascal, restored in accordance with the plan of the Author." But the new editor did not avail himself of the only means for the execution of his purpose — consultation of the original MS. — and his title-page held out hopes which were not fulfilled.

Such was the condition of things when, in 1842, on occasion of a public competition for the best eulogium on Pascal, M. Victor Cousin read to the French Academy his now celebrated "Report on the Necessity of a new Edition of Pascal's 'Thoughts.'" * He had conceived the happy idea — strange that it should have occurred to none of Pascal's numerous editors — of comparing the printed text of the "Thoughts" with the original MS., which had long lain in the "Bibliothèque du Roi." It had been brought thither from the library of St. Germain des Près, and bore marks of its authenticity, not only in the well-known handwriting of Pascal, but in three attestations, carefully specifying its contents, and signed by the Abbé Périer. Besides this, two copies of the original MS. were known to exist, which, on comparison with it, were found

* Published in the Journal des Savants, April to November, 1842; and afterwards enlarged with prefaces and supplementary matter into Études sur Pascal, 5th ed. 1857.

to be, in the main, faithful. One of them had actually been in the hands of Bossut, but without preventing him from reproducing the errors of previous editions. To these authorities, then, M. Cousin turned, with startling result. For nearly two hundred years the world of letters had been deceiving itself with the idea that it possessed a work on the Evidences of Christianity from the hand of Pascal. The statement in the preface of 1670 that "nothing had been added or changed," was entirely false. The genuine fragments had undergone alterations of every kind, abridgment, amplification, transposition, total suppression. Each succeeding editor had dealt as hardly as the first, with such new material as had come to his hand. "There are not," says M. Faugère, "twenty successive lines, either in the first or any subsequent edition, which do not present some alteration, great or small." * We must return upon our steps, and briefly trace the history of this process.

Pascal, in the earlier part of his life, had been accustomed to perform the work of composition in his mind, and to have recourse to pen and paper only to record the finished conception. But in the years which immediately preceded his death, his frequent paroxysms of pain rendered this process too difficult, and he fell into the habit of committing his thoughts, as they occurred to him, to slips of paper, which his editors found put together in different files or bundles. Most of these fragments were in his own handwriting; others he had dictated to any amanuensis whom chance threw in his way. Some slips were written by Madame Périer, one by Domat, one by Arnauld, and one or two are conjectured, from the rudeness of their orthography, to be from the hand of Pascal's servant. The whole are now carefully inserted in a large folio volume of 491 pages. This was probably done by the

* Pensées, Introd. p. xxii.

original editors, as they state that the bundles in which they found the papers were altogether without arrangement; an assertion which remains true of the MS. in its present condition. The difficulty of restoring order to such a chaos was increased by the illegibility of almost every fragment. Many bore marks of frequent erasure and correction: and the handwriting of Pascal at the best has more resemblance to the traces which an insect with inked feet might leave in crawling over the pages, than to any human calligraphy. It was impossible to say whether all these fragments were or were not intended to form part of the work on the Evidences: they were the disjointed record of all that had passed through Pascal's mind for the last four years of his life. Some of them were no more than passages from Montaigne's "Essays;" which he had transcribed, say one set of theorists, that he might refute them at his leisure; according to another, with the intention of adopting them as part of his argument. Many belonged to the period of the "Provincial Letters," or were at least the relics of that controversy; others plainly referred to the Jansenist debate. When, therefore, Port Royal is cited at the bar of criticism to answer the accusation of altering and suppressing the remains of Pascal, the indictment should be fairly drawn. It had not to deal with a finished work, or with materials that could be said in any conceivable sense to make up a book at all. The task was to edit a mass of confused and intractable fragments: to collect from the shipwreck of Pascal's health and life such relics as might be worthy of himself and precious to the Church. To have intercepted the "Provincial Letters" on their way to the press; to have abridged, embellished, garbled them, and then to have sent them forth under Pascal's name, would have been quite a different thing from the treatment which the "Thoughts" underwent at the hands of Port Royal. In a work which even approaches completion, the author's intention is plain,

while the notes which fill his portfolio, if published at all, must leave room for a large exercise of editorial discretion. Such an edition as that of M. Faugère (1844), which simply reproduces the original MS., even in parts of sentences and words, however useful now, as a reaction against former inaccuracy, would have been absurd in 1670. And thus the accusation against Port Royal divides itself into two parts, one of editorial incompetence and indiscretion, one of literary dishonesty to Pascal and his readers.

With M. Victor Cousin's report in our hands, it is difficult to overstate the evidence against the first editors. He divides it into three parts; in the first he treats of the interpolations; in the second, of the alterations; and in the third, of the omissions of the edition of 1670. It published the "Prayer for Aid to make a good Use of Sickness," though with a warning that it did not form a part of Pascal's projected work. It contained "Thoughts on Death," which are now discovered to be extracts from the letter which Pascal wrote to Florin and Gilberte Périer on the death of his father. The chapter entitled "Thoughts on Miracles" is almost wholly made up of fragments of his letters to Mademoiselle de Roannez, torn from their connexion, and printed without a hint of their original form.* Almost every page of the book is an imperfect representation of Pascal's manuscript. It is impossible in this place even to describe the voluminous evidence of the fact: let M. Cousin speak for himself†: —

"Analysis cannot invent a way of altering the style of a great writer, which that of Pascal has not suffered at the hands of Port Royal. There was no Jesuit censure

* It may be remarked, that in 1670, Mademoiselle de Roannez, then Madame de la Feuillade, was still living, a fact which may have interposed a difficulty in the way of publishing even such extracts from Pascal's letters to her as we now possess.

† Études sur Pascal, pref. p. v.

to apprehend here; no other censure was applied than that of mediocrity upon genius;—we allude to the younger Périer and the Duc de Roannez, for there are in truth alterations such as we have not the courage to impute to Nicole and Arnauld. It is very probable that Nicole and Arnauld were consulted upon certain Thoughts, and upon the edifying character which it was thought right to give to the book; but as far as regarded the details, that is to say, the style, Pascal was given up to his nephew and M. de Roannez. And thus he has come down to us, mutilated and disfigured in every way. We have given numerous examples of every kind of alteration; alterations of words, alterations of terms, alterations of phrases; suppressions, substitutions, additions; arbitrary compositions, sometimes of a paragraph, sometimes of a whole chapter, by help of phrases and paragraphs foreign to one another; and what is worse, decompositions more arbitrary still, and quite inconceivable, of chapters which in Pascal's MS. were profoundly elaborated, and perfectly connected in all their parts." I am bound to add, after a careful examination of the evidence, that M. Cousin proves his case.

A few words will finish the enumeration of the editorial sins which have been committed against Pascal. Condorcet had consulted the original MS., but did not introduce a single correction into the text. He published for the first time, but with much arbitrary abridgment, a fragment entitled "De l'Esprit Géométrique." He suppressed some Thoughts, the mystic piety of which was displeasing to his cold and material philosophy, although they had appeared in previous editions. Nor did Bossut, whose labours gave the form to subsequent impressions of the "Thoughts," treat the unfortunate author with more consideration. He had in his possession one of the copies of the MS. of which I have spoken, but reprinted the text in all its former inaccuracy. The new fragments which he published un-

derwent alteration at his hands. He made an arbitrary division of the work into two parts, the titles of which correspond to nothing in Pascal's intention. He adopted from Père Desmolets the extract from Fontaine, relating Pascal's conversation with De Saçi on Epictetus and Montaigne. But he has cut out De Saçi's part; converted a dialogue, which was highly characteristic of the interlocutors, into a dissertation; omitted all the lively background of the scene, and taken upon himself to amplify and abridge at pleasure. He has interpolated in the midst of the "Thoughts," with which it has no connection whatever, Nicole's report of Pascal's "Discourses on the Condition of the Great." He has added certain short treatises on philosophical and mathematical subjects, which have no reference to Pascal's work on Christian evidence, and belong to the earlier part of his literary life. He has recorded, as if it proceeded from Pascal's pen, a half jocular judgment of Des Cartes' philosophy, which is a relic of his conversation preserved by Marguerite Périer. On the same footing stands the declaration of the spirit in which he wrote the "Provincial Letters," which I have already quoted.* He has extracted sayings of Pascal's from Madame Périer's Life, and has even turned into an aphorism an opinion ascribed to him in the "Logic of Port Royal." Last of all, M. Frantin, in the edition of 1835, which promised a restoration of the work to its first form, suppressed every fragment which referred, however indirectly, to the Society of Jesus. Surely never author had such reason to complain of his friends, as Pascal of the editors of the "Thoughts!"

To what extent, then, is Port Royal guilty in regard to Pascal? Let the circumstances be more narrowly looked at before we attempt to reply. I have described the con-

* Vol. i. p. 288.

dition in which Pascal's notes were left, and so have acquitted the editors of the charge of wilfully deforming a finished production. What was to be done with them? "Of three possible methods of dealing with them," says Étienne Périer in the preface, "the first was to print the whole just as it stood; the second was to follow the indications left by Pascal, to use his materials, and to attempt to finish his work. The first was rejected as unproductive of practical good, and unjust to the author's memory; the second, after a fair trial, was laid aside as impracticable. Thus," he continues, "to avoid the inconveniences which presented themselves in both these methods of editing, an intermediate one was chosen, which has been followed in this collection. Among this great number of thoughts, we have taken only those which appeared the clearest and most finished; and we give them as we have found them, *without adding or changing anything;* except that, where they were without arrangement or connection, and confusedly dispersed up and down, we have put them in some sort of order, and brought under the same title those which were upon the same subject, and suppressed all which were either too obscure or too imperfect." *

A most sensible theory! — the only fault to be found with it being that the performance of the work belied the promises of the preface. Nor is there any excuse for the falsehood of the statement. Étienne Périer took a chief share in the preparation of the MS. for the press, and must have known the exact amount of alteration which the fragments had undergone. I can only account for it, and at the same time furnish some slight excuse, by supposing that he was embarrassed between conflicting authorities and interests. He was but twenty-six, and this was the first important matter with which he had been in-

* Quoted by Faugère, Pensées, Introd. p. xxi.

trusted. His mother, at Clermont, insisted, as we learn from Brienne, that nothing should appear in the book which was not her brother's, and in the state in which he left it. On the other hand, Arnauld, Nicole, Roannez, Treville, assured him that the alterations which they had made were absolutely necessary. To such opinions he could not but bow; perhaps was persuaded that Madame Périer's objections were no more than the result of her womanly and provincial ignorance of literary matters. And the preface which he was suddenly called upon to substitute for that which had displeased his mother, was probably his attempt to reconcile all differences and quiet all suspicions.

The difficulty was indefinitely increased by the number of hands through which the book necessarily passed. Not only all the editors whom I have enumerated, but also each of the churchmen with whose testimonials it was issued, assumed the right of suggestion and alteration. A letter from M. de Comminges, in which he thanks Étienne Périer for having made the changes which he had proposed, is still extant.* But a letter from Antoine Arnauld to the elder Périer, in reference to certain objections which had been made by the Abbé le Camus, puts the matter in the clearest light.† "You see, Sir, what it is which has prevented me, not only from writing to you sooner, but also from conferring with those gentlemen on M. le Camus' difficulties in regard to the 'Thoughts.' I hope that the whole thing will settle itself, and that except some passages, which it will be quite right to change, they will agree to leave the rest as it is. But permit me, Sir, to tell you, that one ought not to be so rigid and scrupulous in leaving a book, which is to be exposed to public criti-

* Pensées, ed. Faugère, vol. i. p. 389.

† Lettres d'A. Arnauld, vol. ix. p. 184.

cism, in precisely the state in which it came from the author's hands. It is impossible to be so very exact, when one has to do with enemies as spiteful as ours. It is much more to the purpose to anticipate frivolous objections by some little change, which only softens an expression, than to reduce oneself to the necessity of making apologies.

"This has been the rule of our conduct in regard to the 'Considérations sur les Dimanches et les Fêtes' of M. de St. Cyran, printed by the late Savreux; some of our friends revised it before it went to press, and M. Nicole, who is very accurate, having examined it again after it was printed, made many erasures. Nevertheless the Doctors, to whom I gave it for their approbation, found occasion for many remarks, some of which appeared to us to be reasonable, and rendered fresh erasures necessary. Friends are less fit to examine a book in this way than indifferent persons, because the affection which they have for a work makes them more indulgent and less clear-sighted."

What, then, were the considerations by which this free treatment of Pascal's remains was regulated? The peace of the Church had been just concluded, and it was essential that no book which came from Port Royal should contain any irritating reference to former debates. Pascal had died in the very heat of the controversy; would assuredly have held aloof from the peace had he lived; and there were numerous passages in his notes which would displease Jesuit and Molinist, as much as the "Provincial Letters" themselves. These, then, were remorselessly expunged; a proceeding for which the stoutest stickler for Pascal will hardly blame the friends of Port Royal, who, in 1670, saw before them the promise of a new period of peace and usefulness. Some fragments had been cancelled by Pascal himself; others contained palpable errors of historical or theological statement; what could Port Royal do but

omit and correct? One or two passages again had a freer political tone than would have been acceptable at court; Pascal, whose character was at all times singularly independent, had passed his youth amid the troubles of the Fronde, while the period from 1655 to 1670 had witnessed a great development of royal power, and a corresponding growth of restriction upon private liberty of speech and action. Port Royal had long lain under the imputation of favouring the Fronde, and in the critical posture of its affairs may be readily pardoned even an undue political caution. In the next place, the book, if possible, was to be made orthodox and edifying. By and by, when we find out what Pascal's real theological position was, we shall see how much is involved in this; now it is enough to note the difficulties occasioned by the form of his thought and the turn of his phrase. The style of Port Royal is grave, sedate, cautious; if not destitute of a certain dignity and elevation, yet rarely rising to any heights of passionate eloquence; correct rather than felicitous in the choice of words; intolerant of new combinations and unexpected transitions. Pascal's writing is something different from this; is the work not only of an accurate and elegant scholar, but of a man of original mind and ardent imagination. His soul is written in every line; almost every phrase has an individuality of its own. In such rough notes as form the materials of the "Thoughts" these qualities appear with increased distinctness; what the half-formed sentences lose in polish they gain in power; while their bold generality is often more startling than orthodox. And so his editors, even Arnauld, the greatest of them, did not understand him; they knew not that they were correcting the thoughts of a more powerful thinker, embellishing the work of a more consummate artist, than themselves. It is in the modern editions of the "Thoughts" that we must look for the vivid and nervous style of the "Provincial Letters."

BERKELEY BAPTIST DIVINITY SCHOOL

It is now difficult to say what share of responsibility the real leaders of the Port Royalist party must assume for the first edition of the "Thoughts." The historian of Port Royal is not concerned to defend M. de Roannez, or Treville, Du Bois, or La Chaise. But with these the names of Arnauld and Nicole are conjoined; while in the absence of positive proof, successive critics, according to the predilections or prejudices of each, conjecture them to have taken a greater or less share in the work, which all agree to condemn. And it is fair to add, that the theory of authorship which prevailed at Port Royal, from the times of St. Cyran to a period subsequent to the publication of the "Thoughts," was peculiar. We have already seen that St. Cyran's literary activity was all anonymous; that it was to the last uncertain whether he was the Petrus Aurelius, whose fame had been so great in the Gallican Church.* A good and true book, he thought, was a work done for God, with which no selfish considerations should be permitted to mingle; if the service were well done, it mattered nothing who or what the servant might be. So through all the flourishing period of Port Royal the rights of authorship were willingly abdicated. The directors of the party set each man to do such work as was fittest for him; many pens were employed upon one book, and the name which appeared upon the title-page was sometimes an assumed one, often, when real, not that of the workman who had performed the greatest share of the labour. Arnauld and Nicole found facts, and sometimes arguments for the "Provincial Letters:" the "Facta" of the Curés of Paris were from many hands; the numberless memoirs and statements which appeared throughout the controversy of the Formulary, were of doubtful or double authorship. The school books for which Port Royal was so long famous, circulated as the production

* Vol. i. p. 135.

of "Messieurs de Port Royal:" the "Logic" was the joint work of Arnauld and Nicole: the "New Testament," which goes under the name of De Saçi, engaged in its translation and revision the attention of six or seven others. We have seen in Arnauld's letter, that Port Royal did not scruple to treat a posthumous work of St. Cyran's much as it treated Pascal's "Thoughts." But the crowning instance of the application of this theory, is the celebrated treatise on the Eucharist, "De la Perpétuité de la Foi." It bears the name of Arnauld; was formally approved by twenty-seven bishops; its three volumes were dedicated to three successive Popes, and won the universal applause of the Church. Yet it was really the work of Nicole. The modest author thought it fittest that a priest and doctor should uphold the orthodox faith, and transferred to his friend the honour which arose from so triumphant an apology for the doctrine of the Church.

I do not defend this theory; it is enough to state it. But men who were so careless of their own literary rights were not likely to be careful of the rights of others. They thought that they could improve and adorn Pascal; make an edifying book out of his fragments; erect another monument to the letters and theology of Port Royal. To us the mistake would be half ludicrous, if it were not wholly sad; but it involves from their point of view no moral delinquency. They had found a diamond, and, like unskilful lapidaries, needlessly lessened its size and dulled its lustre in the cutting. For the unlucky statement in the preface, that the diamond had been neither cut nor polished, let Étienne Périer be responsible.*

* For many of the facts stated above, and in general for the literary history of the "Thoughts," I refer to Cousin, Études sur Pascal, pp. 1—310. Ste Beuve, vol. iii. pp. 294—336, and especially to M. Prosper Faugère's Introduction. Pensées de Pascal, vol. i.

Three editions of Pascal's "Thoughts" which have been published since

A necessary pre-requisite to a just estimate of this celebrated book is to dismiss from the mind the idea suggested by the title, and to some extent by the form of its contents, that Pascal intentionally threw his thoughts on religion into the aphoristic shape. The brevity of many of these fragments, the clear and incisive style in which they are written, and the difficulty of assigning to each a place in any connected argument, combine to produce an impression upon the reader's mind which belies their whole history. For the most part they do not express in brief and compressed phrase an independent and rounded thought. Many of them are mere memoranda, incapable of delivering their full meaning to any mind but the writer's. Others state only one view of a subject, one side of an alternative, and either receive the needful modification in other statements, as incomplete and one-sided as themselves, or are left to illustrate the fitness of the motto prefixed to them, "pendent opera interrupta." It is impossible now to say how far the extraordinary hardihood of certain thoughts and phrases was due to Pascal's desire to preserve for future use his conception in all its first force, and to what extent the same quality would have characterised the finished work. No book could be more

M. Cousin's Report may be thus characterised. That of M. Faugère, 2 vols. 8vo. 1844, is a careful reproduction of the MS. in its minutest details, preceded by an excellent introduction, and including in their new form the letters and fragments which Bossut had incorporated with the "Thoughts." It is, however, deformed by a new and arbitrary arrangement of the whole. That of M. Havet, 1 vol. 8vo. 1852, is at present the best that has been issued, containing not only the amended text, and all the documents which are necessary for its illustration, but a careful and minute body of annotations. In short, M. Havet has edited the "Thoughts" as he would have edited an obscure and imperfect work of some Greek or Latin author. The edition of M. Louandre, 1 vol. 12mo. 1854, has little that is distinctive. It is called a "variorum" edition, and, making free use of its predecessors, contains all (with the exception of M. Havet's notes) that the student of Pascal needs.

unjustly judged upon a system of textual interpretation; especially at the present time, when editors have scrupulously reproduced even the half-written words of the original MS. It is true that every phrase directly proceeded from Pascal's mind; but also true that the book, as now edited, contains the refuse of his portfolio, as well as the finished conceptions of his genius. We may think ourselves fortunate if we can surely trace the general course of his argument; we have no right to build theories upon the careless notes, which were designed only to furnish matter for future meditation. There is a singular biographical interest in thus penetrating into the secret workings of such a mind; and the student of Pascal's life will, I venture to say, more constantly see in this book the man than his thought. But any conclusion which we draw, both as to the cogency of his argument, and its relation to his own mental history, must be drawn, not from the balance of conflicting passages, still less from the obscure indications of one or two isolated fragments, but from the general complexion of his thought, and the position which he plainly takes up before the difficulties of natural and revealed religion.

The plan of Pascal's projected work is preserved for us in a remarkable conversation, reported by Étienne Périer, in the preface to the first edition of the "Thoughts." Some ten or twelve years before, that is about 1657 or 1659, Pascal, at the request of several friends, developed, in a discourse which occupied two or three hours in the delivery, the conception which he had formed of a work on the evidences of religion. Human nature is the starting-point. A man of adequate intelligence, who has, up to a certain time, lived a quite unconscious life, begins to examine himself. He is perplexed by the unexpected mysteries, obscurities, contradictions which the examination brings to light, and can no longer refrain from an inquiry into his origin and

destiny. He turns first to the philosophers, but finds in their theories of human nature so much that is defective, contradictory, and manifestly false, as to compel him to seek elsewhere a firm foothold of faith. His search into the various religions of the world is rewarded by no better result, until he is arrested by the singularity of the phenomenon presented by the Jewish people. He opens their sacred books; he finds there a doctrine of the origin of the world and the creation of man, which at first sight strikes him as incomparably more reasonable than any hypothesis to account for these things which he has found in any other system. The account of man's first state of innocence and strength, of his fall, and of the consequent corruption of human nature, next forces itself upon his attention as an adequate explanation of the strange mixture of power and weakness, of grovelling and aspiration, of which he has become conscious in himself. But these books not only describe the symptoms of the great human malady, but provide a medicine, inasmuch as they contain the clear promise of a deliverer to come; in short, could any external proof of their authority be produced, nothing would be wanting to complete the scientific accordance with all the conditions of the problem to be solved, in which they already stand. Such proof Pascal next proceeds to give. He dwells alternately on the internal evidence of the authenticity and authority of the books of Moses, and on the external force of conviction exerted by his miracles. But then all the law is to be received by us in a figurative sense, as the type and shadow of better things to come; and the realisation of these figures in Jesus Christ, and especially the fulfilment in him of Hebrew prophecy, upon which great stress was laid, naturally lead the mind from the Mosaic to the Christian dispensation. Here the course of proof, both in regard to the Saviour and his apostles, is the same — an appeal to the historical verisimilitude of

their lives, to the character of their teaching, and to the evidence of their miracles. And the singularity of these facts, together with their extraordinary coincidence and harmony, is employed to prove that the Christian religion, as finally established in the world, is the work, not of man, but of God.*

The following fragment, which has been published only since 1842, points to a similar course of argument. It is evidently a brief summary of the same plan as is indicated in the conversation reported by Étienne Périer.

"First Part: Misery of man without God.

Second Part: Happiness of man with God.

(Otherwise:)

First Part: That nature is corrupt: By nature herself.

Second Part: That there is a Redeemer: By the Scriptures."

The second form of the scheme plainly indicates, not only the subject matter of each division, but the kind of evidence to be brought to bear upon it.†

That a characteristic portion of this argument had long been in Pascal's mind appears from his famous conversation with De Saçi upon Epictetus and Montaigne, which took place soon after his first retirement to Port Royal in 1655. A report of this conversation was first published in 1728, by Père Desmolets, who extracted it from the then unprinted memoirs of Fontaine. Who the reporter was it is now impossible to guess. Fontaine, the only person who could throw any light on the matter, had been dead nearly twenty years when it was first given to the world. But the genius of Pascal is visible in every line of the report, especially as printed by Desmolets, before Fontaine's editors had planed away the few roughnesses which relieved the otherwise level surface of

* Pensées, ed. Faugère, vol. i. p. 372.

† Pensées, ed. Havet, p. 267.

his style.* "Pascal had been sent to Port Royal," says Fontaine, "that M. Arnauld might cope with him in all that regarded the high sciences, and that M. de Saçi might teach him to despise them." Now M. de Saçi's "manner in talking with people was to adapt his conversation to those with whom he spoke. If he saw, for example, M. Champagne, he talked with him of painting; if M. Hamon, he discoursed of medicine; if the surgeon of the place, he questioned him on surgery . . . . every subject helped him to pass to God, and to bring others to Him also." So when Pascal came, he began to talk to him of his philosophical studies, and as these were for the most part confined to Epictetus and Montaigne, those authors formed the subject of conversation. The situation was sufficiently singular; each of the interlocutors was a man of but little reading; Augustine and the Bible were to De Saçi what Epictetus and Montaigne had been to Pascal. The one reposed securely in the arms of his religious system, and saw in philosophical study only a source of superfluous knowledge and painful disquietude. The other was deterred from much meditation on other men's minds, by the introverted activity, the restless self-questioning of his own. The issue of such an encounter could not be doubtful. The real battle had been fought in the long weariness of Pascal's Parisian life, and won in the ecstasies of the 23rd of November. This is no more than a mimic fight, in which armies, only apparently hostile, deploy their forces, and struggle and yield, according to a preconcerted plan.

For more than the briefest outline of this conversation the reader must betake himself to Fontaine, or to one of the recent editions of the "Thoughts." Pascal first dwells on the lofty conception of human duty which characterises the half Christian stoicism of Epictetus; upon his clear perception and systematic development of the truth "that

* Pensées, ed. Havet, Introd. p. xxxiv. Fontaine, vol. iii. p. 77.

man's whole study and desire ought to be to know and obey the will of God." He would have been worthy even of divine honours had he been equally well acquainted with his weakness. But he knows only one side of human nature; is ignorant of a whole series of facts in regard to it; and so is led into innumerable practical errors. To him, both in his knowledge and his ignorance, Montaigne is precisely contrary. Human weakness is his constant theme; of human aspiration after better things he knows nothing. Our faculties are deceptive; the single refuge from dogmatism is universal doubt, and in the very assertion that we doubt, we dogmatise. As a Christian and a Catholic, he receives the faith submissively; and then turns round and attacks heretics with his accustomed weapons. How is it possible that their theories should be true, since truth and certainty are altogether beyond the reach of human intellects? Revelation apart, what presumption for a finite mind to form a conception of an infinite being! On what, but on the very truth that God is, and that He is just and true, do we rest our faith on the trustworthiness of those faculties which we illogically use to search after and find Him? Nor does any other human knowledge rest on a more certain foundation; geometry is based upon axioms which are incapable of proof; physical science is full of assumptions; the doubtfulness of history is an old reproach; politics, morals, jurisprudence have no foundation except in force and usage. "What know I?" is the wise man's motto; and as for action, since all actions are equally justifiable or unjustifiable, custom weighs on the side of one alternative, and he does as others do. What then is the reconciliation of these two philosophies? Each is true in part, and in part false; where are we to find the doctrine which will weld them into a homogeneous whole? In the Catholic dogma of the fall of man. The theory of Epictetus assumes that man still possesses all the pristine strength and beauty of

his nature, and ignores the absolute incapacity of his present condition. The theory of Montaigne describes him as he is, but does not take into the account his dim recollections and irrepressible desire of a more perfect state. The one is the parent of pride, the other of inertness; the one denies that man wants, the other forgets that he can receive, any help that is not in himself. And thus we are led back once more to Pascal's characteristic position, that all revealed truth rests upon the incapacity of the human mind, all moral achievement upon the corruption of the human heart.

Bossut's division of the "Thoughts" into two parts, one containing "Thoughts on Philosophy, Morals, and Belles Lettres," the other, "Thoughts immediately relating to Religion," is not without an accidental conformity with the plan of the book. It consists of two halves, philosophical and theological, which correspond to the common distinction between natural and revealed religion. The first is occupied with the career of the supposed inquirer up to the point where he becomes acquainted with the books of Moses. It paints human nature, and brings into strong relief the inability of philosophy to explain its mysteries. The second, which is still less complete than the first, treats of the correspondence between the doctrines of Christianity, as conceived by Pascal, with the facts of human nature already stated, and draws out the arguments in favour of revealed religion, derived from miracle, type, and prophecy. Many sections of the argument, as sketched by Pascal in the conversation before alluded to, are altogether wanting. Some fragments which found a place in the MS. volume probably record other trains of thought. The most finished portion of the whole will be found in the thoughts on the nature and condition of man, upon which his whole fabric of evidence was made to rest. And these clearly reveal to us that peculiar theory of the relation of man

to religion, which at once distinguishes this book from others on the same subject.

Pascal is Montaigne with a difference. He adopts the whole of his doctrine of human nature, and states it with a vehemence and a precision altogether foreign to the Epicurean philosopher of Perigord. For the latter was quite content with it, believed it as much as he believed anything, and held his Catholicism only as a point of prudence, and in deference to the prejudices of his time and country; while the former would have found this level waste of uncertainty a howling wilderness of despair, if he had not seen in it the way to a happy region of faith. Man is but a point in the universe, midway between two infinitudes; one of which escapes him by its magnitude, the other by its littleness. He thinks, and the disproportion between the finite faculty and the infinite object of thought mocks all his efforts in the pursuit of truth. Imagination always lies in wait to entice reason from her straight path; the meanest physical hindrances distract a mind mated with a frame of flesh and blood. It is hard to say whether our dreams or our waking thoughts are realities. True philosophy laughs at philosophy; the confession of ignorance is the end as well as the beginning of the highest wisdom; only Pyrrhonism is truth. The moral is as helpless as the intellectual nature. We are the playthings of pride, vanity, self-love, hypocrisy. Right and justice are based on usage, and derive their authority from force. "Three degrees' elevation of the pole overturns all jurisprudence. A meridian determines truth; after a few years' possession, fundamental laws are changed; right has its epochs. The entry of Saturn into the Lion marks the origin of such or such a crime. Fine justice that is bounded by a river! Truth on this side of the Pyrenees, error on that." * "Justice is that which is established." †

* Pensées, ed. Havet, p. 40. † Ibid. p. 73.

"Justice is subject to dispute; force is easily to be recognised, and is beyond dispute. Thus men have not been able to give force to justice, because force has contradicted justice, and has asserted that it was unjust, and itself just. And thus, being unable to effect that what was just should be also strong, men have ordained that what was strong should be also just."* To sum up all in one phrase, "We are incapable alike of truth and goodness."†

But Pascal, however accordant with Montaigne in his estimate of human faculties, cannot be satisfied, like him, to leave the matter there; to utter a garrulous philosophy while all these floods of uncertainty are seething below, or to wander contentedly through life, possessing and asking for no moral guidance. Man, as described by him, has not lost all his dignity, inasmuch as he is conscious of his misery. Only a dethroned king is unhappy in the loss of a kingdom; no man afflicts himself for the want of that which he never possessed. The knowledge of our wretchedness is itself our grandeur. "Man is no more than a reed, the feeblest thing in nature, but it is a reed that thinks. It is not necessary that the whole universe should arm itself for his destruction. A vapour, a drop of water suffices to kill him. But even if the universe were to crush him, he would be more noble than that which kills him, because he knows that he dies, and the advantage which the world has over him. The universe knows nothing of it."‡ Our sense of the grandeur of the human mind appears in the disproportionate value which we set upon one another's good opinion; our consciousness of misery in the whole of our amusements, which are only eager attempts to forget an ever-present woe. It is, then, to this mixed frame of mind that revealed religion addresses itself, at once explaining the contradictions and satisfying the wants of human

* Pensées, ed. Havet, p. 75. † Ibid. p. 45. ‡ Ibid. p. 20.

nature. The story of the original innocence of man reveals the source of our aspiration; the promise of a Saviour answers to our acknowledged incapacity and wretchedness. God does for us in the Bible what we could never have done for ourselves, and brings down to our level a truth otherwise inaccessible to our striving. There is no such thing as natural religion; revealed religion is alone possible.*

It is not necessary to describe Pascal's method of dealing with the evidences of revealed religion. The most interesting section of the second portion of the work is that which treats of miracles; though here it is quite plain that not the miracles of the Scriptures, but those of the Holy Thorn were chiefly in his view. The Biblical science of Pascal's age and Church was shallow, credulous, illogical; and there is no proof that he was up to the level even of his age and Church. He never quotes the Old or New Testament in the original languages, but always in the Vulgate. He sometimes falls in his citations into mistakes of simple ignorance. Of the existence of all the branches of inquiry included in the words "Biblical Criticism," he evidently knows nothing. We might have expected from him in this half of his work, many striking and suggestive remarks on the events of the evangelical history; many profound interpretations of single texts or phrases of Scripture. But the incompleteness of his labour has, to a great extent, deprived us of these; and the value and interest of the "Thoughts" lie almost wholly in the first or philosophical section.

The phrases natural and revealed religion in themselves imply, that man's religious knowledge may be divided into two parts; that which he has or might have discovered by the exercise of his own faculties, and that which flows in

* The reader may remark, in connection with this part of the subject, that the God on whom Pascal seems to rest, in that singular record of the 23rd of November, is "the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, not of philosophers and learned men."

upon him from a supernatural source. The line between them will be differently drawn by different religious systems. Some conceive it to be for the honour of revealed religion to narrow the extent and impair the validity of the conclusions of natural theology; while others are willing to find in its arguments a confirmation of the teachings of Scripture. Philosophers and divines make this a constant battle ground; each party anxious to reduce the pretensions of the other to the narrowest possible limits. But even when this question is settled, others still more difficult rise up for solution. What is the function of reason in regard to revelation? Has it a critical office to perform towards the truth which it is confessedly unable to originate? Is that function of criticism confined to the evidence of revelation, and out of place in regard to its substance? Is it right that reason should freely test even the external authentication of revealed truth, or is there not an authority which may stand in the place of evidence, and impose a system of doctrines upon the unwilling mind? I do not pretend to answer these questions, which the theological student will recognise as lying at the basis of all Christian controversies; I only indicate them for the purpose of clearly defining Pascal's theory of religious evidence. He confined the functions of the human intellect within the straitest limits. It has no power of discovering, of testing, of combining religious truth. An universal doubt is the only end in which it can reasonably rest. He does not think it worth while to trouble his readers with the metaphysical reasonings, or with the argument from nature, in proof of the being and attributes of God; they have no true force of conviction in them. He founds revealed, on the impossibility of natural religion. The powers of reason in regard to revelation are simply receptive.

Were my attitude towards Pascal's "Thoughts" one of

philosophical criticism, I might point out the inconsistency of his theory of human reason with the task which he undertook, and so adduce his work as an answer to itself. What object in producing evidence to faculties which are incapable of estimating it? Is not the whole Protestant habit of thought towards religious truth, logically deducible from the very idea of a book on "The Evidences?" But it is more to the present purpose to show the close connection in which the theory of the "Thoughts" stands to the whole of Pascal's thought and life. His contempt of philosophical research had a double source in his Jansenism and in his mathematical studies. The only theory of Christianity which exercised any powerful influence upon him, takes its root in the doctrine of original sin. Human faculties, by reason of the primal transgression, have become hopelessly weak and corrupt. The heart, formed for disinterested affection, stirs only with self-love; the conscience errs in its discrimination of right and wrong. Only the omnipotent grace of God, the single and all-sufficient helper of the soul, can begin and complete the work of restoration. And we have only to extend the same theory to the intellectual powers of man, to find ourselves in Pascal's position. The human reason as originally given by God, was fitted for the investigation and discovery of truth. But it, too, has suffered by the general malady, and can no longer perform its functions, except by help of the Holy Spirit. Strengthened and purified by Divine grace, it is able to apprehend the truths of revelation, while its independent strivings after God, necessarily end in uncertainty and error.

It is not uninstructive to mark, that Pascal's mind, when left to itself, took a mathematical direction; and that mathematical methods of investigating truth were those which he most successfully used. And a great familiarity with necessary truths, and with the precise and cogent reasonings used in their demonstration, often unfits the mind

for dealing with philosophical and religious theories. The possibility of absolute proof, the exclusion of a difference of belief, the manifest absurdity of an opposite hypothesis in the one case, contrast strangely with the diverse readings of evidence, the conflict of testimony, the constant inconclusiveness of demonstration, the existence of diverging and even contradictory opinions in the other. An inquirer trained in the schools of mathematics, comes to religion, asking for proof of a kind which she is not prepared to give; her historical evidences appear to him full of breaks and flaws, her certainties of consciousness no better than bold assertions. His researches have been into relations of number and magnitude which precisely accord with the constitution of his own mind, and do not stretch beyond his grasp; here the soul is in contact with infinite existence, whose many-sidedness perplexes its survey, whose depth mocks its insight, the very characteristic of whose infinity it is to transcend and confound its methods of proof. We know God only by a direct act of consciousness prior to, and independent of all argument: analogous to the operation of the mind, by which we apprehend the ideas which are the foundation of all mathematical reasoning. These very ideas Pascal, in his later speculations, came to regard as requiring, and yet incapable of proof; and thus vitiating by their primal uncertainty all the mathematical conclusions, which, with whatever cogency of reasoning, were drawn from them. His habit of mind therefore, was such as to misapprehend and exaggerate the inconclusiveness which his religious theory encouraged him to find in the speculations of natural theology. The arguments for the existence of God did not compel conviction like the demonstrations of Euclid, and were therefore contemptuously thrown aside.

A passage in the "Thoughts," which Pascal himself struck out, and replaced by another less startling in phrase,

comprehends the whole of his theory of human knowledge:

"Il faut avoir ces trois qualités, pyrrhonien, géomètre, Chrétien soumis: et elles s'accordent, et se tempèrent, en doutant où il faut, en assurant où il faut, en se soumettant où il faut." *

However logically accordant with Jansenism Pascal's position might be, it was hardly likely to find favour with his editors; all of them men of a less eager spirit than himself, and some of them famous for the philosophical speculations at which he scornfully laughed. Antoine Arnauld in a letter to Florin Périer, which I have already quoted †, animadverts upon the doctrine that justice is altogether based upon force and usage, and defends his opinion that the passage which contains it should be omitted from the published work. It was perhaps owing to such changes and omissions as were made by Port Royal, in hope of accommodating the book to the standard of Jansenist orthodoxy, that the charge of scepticism was not definitely brought against Pascal until it was made in M. Cousin's "Report." Since that time the controversy has been bitter. The philosophers impeach Pascal as a traitor to philosophy. Even the Jesuits forget his Jansenism in the desire to claim him as a defender of religion. And as usual, neither party succeeds in convincing the other.

To enter upon the details of this debate would be foreign to the general purpose of my work, and would besides, involve the necessity of copious quotation and minute criticism of Pascal's text. The materials for a general judgment of the strife have already been afforded. If the summary of Pascal's argument, which I have given, be

* Pensées, ed. Havet, p. 184.

† Lettres d'A. Arnauld, vol. ix. p. 184.

in the main true; if I have at all rightly described his method of proof, he must be held to belong to the sceptical school of philosophy. The question is not one which can be decided by quoting fragment against fragment; by balancing an isolated declaration of doubt with an isolated declaration of belief. This method is especially inapplicable to such imperfect notes and hints as alone Pascal has left, and could prove at best only that he was more or less consistent in his adherence to a governing principle of thought. The scepticism, if it is there at all, leavens the whole book; is involved in the assumptions from which it starts, and the methods by which it proceeds; lurks in the conclusions to which it arrives. It may be wholly or in part unconscious: believing men often write and say, what to other minds appears to contain the very essence of unbelief. And without wishing to adopt the words in which M. Cousin states his case, or to take a side in the debates to which that statement has given rise, I am compelled to believe, that in regard to all philosophical truth, Pascal was as much a sceptic as his favourite teacher Montaigne.

Montaigne rested quietly in his philosophical doubt; Pascal, with marvellous mental dexterity, built his edifice of religious faith upon its uncertain foundation. And thus he was not a sceptic, if we use the word in its common English meaning. It is impossible to doubt the almost fanatical sincerity of his religious belief. Religion appeared to his conscience to ask the sacrifice of all that had hitherto made the brightness of his life; his intercourse with the world, his domestic affections, his mathematical and physical studies, the comforts which alone could prolong and make endurable his frail and painful existence; and the sacrifice was unhesitatingly offered. He ranged himself from the first upon the side of a persecuted minority of the Church, and devoted his wonderful powers to its defence with such eagerness and persistence, as to overrun the zeal of the

great captains who had enlisted him in the service. There is no proof that he betook himself to the Church as the one refuge open to him from the torments of doubt; or that by any effort of will, he compelled a mind, which would otherwise have wandered through boundless fields of speculation, to rest uneasily beneath the shadow of authority. His faith was clear, calm, undoubting; his book is not so much the record of any personal struggles through which he had himself arrived at Christian belief, as the exhibition of what he considers the best way of dealing with atheists. He finds that his keen mathematical intellect can detect flaws in the ordinary evidences of religion. He sees that those evidences are not logically accordant with the doctrine which shapes his theory of Christianity. And therefore he resolves to accept the conclusions of the sceptics up to a certain point, and yet to deduce from them the doctrines of Roman Catholicism. Other men need a rock upon which to build their lighthouse; he will erect his beacon upon the quicksands, or the heaving waves themselves: they attach their argument to the assumption of faith in human faculties; he will chain his reasoning to the confession of their incapacity. The doctrine is sceptical enough; but the teacher, if we look only to his personal belief, no sceptic.*

* To cite passages from the "Thoughts" in support of the opinions expressed above, would be to plunge into the textual debate which I am anxious to avoid. But I may generally refer the reader to the celebrated argument for the existence of God, which substitutes for the rejected *à priori* and *à posteriori* arguments, a proof, that according to the theory of probabilities, it is most advantageous to believe in God, although it is impossible to demonstrate that He exists. (Havet, art. x. p. 145.) Passages similar in spirit, are scattered throughout the first or philosophical half of the "Thoughts;" and in the new editions may be read, in all their original force and abruptness of phrase.

The following quotation from Locke is not without instruction in this connection:—

"Reason is natural revelation, whereby the Eternal Father of light, and

It shows the vitality of Pascal's style, that any trace of the qualities displayed in the "Provincial Letters" was still to be found among the corrections and embellishments introduced by his editors into that recension of the "Thoughts," which under different modifications passed current till 1842. And now the restored text exhibits a style like that of the "Provincial Letters" in the making. The force, the life, the precision of phrase are all there; more rarely the exquisite polish which almost lifts Pascal's finished works above the reach of criticism. Never was a book so full of unconscious autobiography, as the "Thoughts" in their new form. In the case of some of the more polished fragments we can trace the thought from the first rude hint or exaggerated statement, through more stages than one, up to the epigrammatic neatness and perfection which stand out in bold relief from the page. It is a singular privilege to be thus admitted into the studio of a great artist in words, and to watch him at his work. But beyond this, the life of the man is as plainly revealed as the habits of the author. The Jansenist, the friend of Port Royal, the destroyer of casuistry, the doubter of Papal infallibility, the geometrician, the ascetic, the devout Catholic, the sick man, are all there. The whole argument rests upon the doctrine of grace, and the correlative doctrine of original sin. If he speaks of miracles, his thoughts are of the Holy Thorn; of the Church, he cannot be silent as to the scandals which afflict,

Fountain of all knowledge, communicates to mankind that portion of truth which He has laid within the reach of their natural faculties. Revelation is natural reason enlarged by a new set of discoveries communicated by God immediately, which reason vouches the truth of, by the testimony and proofs it gives that they come from God. So that he that takes away reason, to make way for revelation, puts out the light of both, and does much-what the same, as if he would persuade a man to put out his eyes, the better to receive the remote light of an invisible star by a telescope."—*Essay*, book iv. chap. xix. § 4.

and the debates which divide it. His heart goes with his mind into every subject of discussion. He condemns the use of the personal pronoun by authors, and yet leaves his soul upon every page. He not unfrequently calls up some imaginary interlocutor, with whom he argues, upon whom he spends all his persuasions. His eagerness vents itself in apostrophe and ejaculation. Had his work been completed, it might have lost in life and movement, what it would have gained in polish and correctness; incomplete, it remains the transcript of the writer's heart.

For the perfection of Pascal's style — I had almost said for the perfection of prose composition — we must go to the "Provincial Letters." At first the reader forgets to notice the style, so natural, so complete is its presentation of the author's thought; as sometimes the distant hills stand out so clearly as to encourage the belief that no atmospheric medium floats between. Some happy turn of phrase, some subtle touch of irony reveals the hand of a master; and he begins to discover that every sentence possesses the polish, and many the point of an epigram. Yet the point is in the matter, not merely in the words; the phrases are not padded to fill out the limb of an antithesis; each fully expresses its thought and no more. But every thought is expressed in a way which defies amendment; a word more or less is felt to destroy the fine harmony and proportion of the whole. The naturalness of the dialogue, the keenness of the wit, the grave and quiet irony, the Socratic art with which the inquirer compels his various interlocutors to speak as serves his purpose, would be alone sufficient to account for the fame of the book. In them speaks the Pascal of the salons of Paris; the Pascal of Port Royal utters himself in the sublime moral vehemence, the eloquent invective, of the later letters. The gay mockery of the debate on sufficient and efficacious grace, seems to proceed from other lips than those which de-

nounce the calumniators of Port Royal. And the change is great from either to the almost savage sarcasm, which, in the "Thoughts," attempts to cut away the ground of certainty from all human knowledge, and denies, that apart from revelation, there are such things as truth and justice.

The perfectness of Pascal's style is an indication of a similar quality in his mental constitution. Whatever he did was done with wonderful force, precision, completeness. I do not know how far this remark would apply to the method of his mathematical investigations; it certainly is true of their results. The experiment of the Puy de Dôme exactly supplied the missing link in the chain of discovery, and established for ever the fact of atmospheric pressure. The arithmetical machine was, so to speak, a creation out of nothing, the offspring of his own brain, and was patiently improved till it answered its purpose. The theory of the Cycloid was, in like manner, swiftly, surely, independently worked out, and surpassed the labours of the competing geometers as much in completeness and symmetry of execution as in rapidity of conception. And this is the character of Pascal's originality. He does not construct systems of the universe, or mark an era in philosophical thought, or compass the whole sphere of human knowledge, like Des Cartes. He is not conversant with all the literature which it becomes a learned man to know, like Arnauld. He probably knew little Greek and no Hebrew; much of his classical learning came to him at second hand from Montaigne; all the books with which his writings betray any acquaintance might be enumerated in half-a-dozen lines. What he thought and knew came almost wholly out of himself, was the result of his independent thought, and bears, in the completeness of its symmetry, the impress of his nature. If sometimes his originality, in regard to any special thought or investiga-

tion, has been called in question, the explanation will be found in his ignorance of what other men thought and did. The substance, in such cases, is only apparently another's; the perfectness of the form wholly his own.

But Pascal's originality is twofold; it is an individuality of character as well as of mind. And this is the thought which once more brings us back to Jacqueline, of whom we might almost seem to have lost sight. The foundation of the brother's and sister's life was laid in that eagerness and sensitiveness of spirit, which are at once the condition and the trial of a certain kind of genius. For both, the common round of social duty appeared too level and confined; and both sought a higher ideal in the watchfulness, the mortification, the rapture of the monastic life. Yet either was unable to subdue a restless conscience, an energetic will, an eager spirit to the monotonous uniformity of a community or a party; Port Royal stood almost alone against the Church; yet Jacqueline died of a broken heart, because she had set even Port Royal above her own conscience, and Blaise fainted in despair, when, as it seemed to him, Arnauld preferred peace to truth. And the strongly throbbing heart, which so lives and moves in the fragments of Pascal's "Thoughts," is equally to be noted in Jacqueline's letters. The phrases are full of tears even yet. When she implores her brother, on her first flight to Port Royal, not to take away from her that which he cannot give; when she declares to Arnauld that if it is not a woman's part to defend the truth, she can at least die for it — she touches the perennial fountains of emotion, and the reader's heart, after two centuries of change and forgetfulness, leaps forth to answer hers. There is even a certain unity about her life which is wanting to her brother's. At Port Royal, brothers and sisters ran a noble race, in which the victory was not always to the stronger sex; Angélique and Agnès Arnauld are greater than the

Bishop of Angers and the Doctor Antoine: and Angélique de St. Jean Arnauld is the ablest of D'Andilly's children. So in Jacqueline Pascal we note none of the hesitation which made her brother vibrate between the worldly and the religious life, and perhaps finally avenged itself in the fanatical austerities of his last years. She makes her choice at first; delay only confirms her intention; and her life flows on in quiet, happy current to the end.

The thread of gold which runs through the whole of Pascal's character, and forms the clue to the comprehension of its unity, is his passionate love of truth. There is a point of view from which every phase of what we call genius may be reduced to this single idea. The man of genius is he who is able to penetrate beneath the outward shows of things to their real nature; and to express what he sees, whether by help of pen, or brush, or chisel, in language intelligible to those who have not his own faculty of insight. His words are not only more beautiful than theirs, but in their very beauty are felt to be more true. He soars so high above the external differences of things, as to be able to group them according to their real affinities, and to reconcile apparent contradictions, in the unity of an essential likeness. However circumstance and the natural limitations of his faculties may combine to give a certain direction to his insight, no truth ever comes amiss to him, for he recognises it as one aspect of the infinite reality upon which he is wont to gaze from another side. This universal appetite for knowledge, this eager welcome of all truth, in the full belief that it is part of one harmonious whole, however imperfect the present apprehension of the harmony, is indeed the prerogative of the noblest minds, and when joined with a faculty of investigation as various as itself, makes up a character which the world has rarely seen. Pascal was not such, perhaps could not have become such, under any conceivable discipline of circumstance;

and yet shows a many-sidedness of genius, which it is hard to parallel elsewhere. In pure mathematics, as well as in physical science, he moves with the firm and graceful step of a master; and the magnitude of his achievements continually rouses, and almost justifies the regret that he should have abandoned these for less fertile fields of labour. His single effort in mechanics is a remarkable example of creative power. Even in the act of undermining all philosophy, he gives signal proof of philosophical insight and acuteness. His theological speculations have upon them the indelible mark of his originality; though his acquaintance with the literature of the subject is of the scantiest, he does not fall into the track of other apologists, but pursues a path of his own. It is not often that the same mind has such a power of appreciating two kinds of truth so different as the mathematical and the religious; a still rarer phenomenon that it should possess so keen a sense of beauty as to form a tie of affinity with the nature of the poet or the artist. Yet Pascal was an artist in words; his style is as perfect and rounded a creation as those of Corneille and Racine; and perhaps in the very characteristics which make it prose, truer than theirs to the spirit of the French language. But then the quality of Pascal's genius of which I am speaking is not a mere intellectual versatility; the passion for truth filled his heart and life as well as his mind. There are men who join to great powers of discovering truth, a singular carelessness as to their own moral relations to it; will hide it, or retract it, or explain it away, or hold back from following it to its necessary consequences, at the prospect of any danger to life and reputation. Pascal, on the other hand, was almost a Protestant in his attitude to theological truth; and did not so much accept the creed of his Church, as select for himself a form of Catholic belief to which he clung with a constancy, which in an earlier age would have

won for him a crown of martyrdom. And then it is not always the philosopher, the man of letters, the theologian who possesses that insight into moral truth, that fierce energy of will, which enabled Pascal to translate the lessons of Port Royal into the austerities of his last years. For here the love of truth assumes a fresh shape; he sees before him, as he thinks, the ideal of a Christian life; he hates pretence and unreality in himself, not less, but more than elsewhere; and he spends his remaining strength in the attempt to make himself a true man.

There is a certain incompleteness in Pascal's life, a feeling of promise unfulfilled, of powers too soon condemned to inaction, which surround it with a tender and melancholy interest. The fight was fought out at an age when some men have hardly armed themselves for the struggle; and more than half the manly years of that too brief life were spent in enforced idleness. How trite, and yet how true a homily of human weakness is read by the marriage of that strong and fiery soul to so frail a frame of flesh and blood! Even in the contemplation of his achievements, it is hard to forget the still greater possibilities which passed away with him to the grave fruitless. Not often are we so powerfully reminded that there is something in human nature which surpasses its best performance; that while the meanest man is better than his actions, the noblest cannot rise in execution to the level of his thought.

II.

THE SCHOOLS OF PORT ROYAL.

The credit of having first perceived the power of education as a social force, and of having systematically attempted to apply it to the attainment of certain fixed ends, belongs to the Jesuits. The influence which they aspired to exercise could not be based upon any popular enthusiasm, which, however overmastering, was necessarily fluctuating and transitory. Other religious orders had succeeded in swaying the mind of Christendom by an appeal to the religious passions; but each in turn, had been compelled to make way for a younger, and therefore more powerful rival. And the Society of Jesus, with that keen practical instinct which so strangely tempered the fanatic zeal of its founders, felt that if its empire over men's hearts and lives was to be more lasting and complete than that of the Franciscans or the Dominicans, it must attack society in the school-room, and mould the age by educating it. As soon, therefore, as it was established on a firm foundation, it began that career of aggression upon the ancient seats of education, which it has continued, with a persistence which marks its sense of the importance of the struggle, up to the present day. No school was too humble, no college too splendid to escape its insidious encroachments, or its open rivalry. Many of the old universities were in possession of other religious orders, who hotly resented the interference of the intrusive teachers; so that in some places, as in Paris, we find the University arrayed in avowed and unre-

lenting opposition to the Jesuits. But the Society, wherever it seriously set itself to acquire supremacy, was soon supreme in the education of the rich and powerful laity. It would spare no pains to form the mind and character of a young nobleman. Its discipline knew how to vary according to the requirements of the pupil or his parents; in some seminaries the course of training was austere enough; in others, there was no neglect of worldly and courtly accomplishment. The ablest of the brotherhood thought the education of those who in a few years were to fill high places in Church and State, an office worthy of all forethought and labour. It would be wrong to deny that many of these workers in a calling which does not even yet receive its due share of honour, were moved by a true and noble zeal in the cause of literature and education; and yet it is beyond doubt that a single spirit subtly pervaded every Jesuit college, and that the great aim was to make all the pupils faithful sons of the Church, and ardent friends of the Society. To this many greater ends were sacrificed; and in the comparative ill success of the Jesuit seminaries, considered simply as places of education, the freer spirit of the old universities has been avenged. The human mind is a plant, which, if it is to blossom and bear fruit, must be fed and fanned by the free dews and airs of heaven. Since the revival of letters, not a single work of genius, not a marked step in scientific discovery, can claim a Jesuit origin. Port Royal, in the brief period during which it was permitted to flourish, boasts more famous names than the Society after three centuries of existence.

The schools of Port Royal began with St. Cyran. His single point of resemblance to the Jesuits, was his recognition of the importance of education and confession, as the means by which the influence of the Church should be brought to bear upon the world. He too, like the Society,

may have had his ecclesiastical schemes which he desired to promote by these instruments; though, if so, they regarded rather the reformation than the maintenance of the Church in her present condition. However this may be, he at least used them in a different and more scrupulous spirit. The Jesuits would accept any penitent, and saw that an influence might be exerted through and upon all; St. Cyran scrutinised his penitents as closely as a sincere penitent might scrutinise his director, and turned away more than he received. The Jesuit seminaries were public places of education which sought to bring the spirit of the Society into contact with the whole nation; the schools of Port Royal, as established by St. Cyran, were private classes where a few chosen boys of known parentage and promising disposition were trained by half-a-dozen teachers. Perhaps the two systems of education had hardly a fair trial; for the long rivalry between Jesuit and Jansenist which I have already recorded, stamped a party impress upon the pupils of Port Royal, which under more favourable circumstances would not have been an effect of their training; while the Jesuit colleges, taking their scholars from a wider and more varied field, as well as being less solicitous to produce a specific moral and religious result, appeared to encourage a freer and more natural development of character. But it was the fault of the Society that Port Royal became a party; and hardly its merit, if, amongst so many pupils, some outgrew the swaddling clothes of its system of education, and instead of Jesuits, proved to be men.

There was nothing more remarkable in St. Cyran's character than his love of children. And yet it hardly seems to have been a spontaneous outflow of affection so much as a half tender, half reverent emotion with which he regarded those in whom the original corruption of human nature had been newly washed away in baptism, and who, by watchfulness and prayer, might still be kept

in a state of grace. "Thus M. de St. Cyran," says Lancelot*, "always manifested to children a kindness which amounted to a species of respect, that in them he might honour innocence, and the Holy Spirit which dwells with it. He was wont to bless them, and to make the sign of the cross upon their foreheads; and when they were old enough, he always said to them some good word which was, as it were, a seed of truth which he scattered in passing, and in God's sight, in order that in His good time, it might germinate." His maxims of education were characterised by the same deep insight into human nature as his use of confession. "He usually reduced all that ought to be done with children to these three things: to speak little, to bear much, to pray still more." The teacher was to work more by the silent forces of love and example, than by precept. To gain the affection of children it was worth while even to share in their amusements: the grave and austere St. Cyran had been known to play at ball with little ones of seven years old. Punishment, especially corporal punishment, was to be used only in the last resort, when patience and expostulation and all gentler means had failed; and even then not without fervent prayer. "To punish without previous prayer," he said, "was to act like the Jews, and to forget that everything depended upon the blessing of God, and upon His grace which we must try to draw down upon them by our patience." But while prayer was the teacher's strength, he was to avoid the error of instilling into the children's minds religious ideas and emotions beyond their years. St. Cyran "was careful to give the caution, that in order to manage children well, it was rather necessary to pray than to cry, and to speak more of them to God, than of God to them; for he did not approve of holding long religious discourses with them, or of weary-

* Vol. ii. p. 332.

ing them with instructions." He thought it needful to regulate in the minutest particulars the place of education, that the children might have none but honourable and pious examples before their eyes. For this purpose, the teacher ought to have entire control over his pupils, even to the setting aside, for a time, of parental authority. St. Cyran himself had refused, on this ground, to undertake the education of a prince of the house of Lorraine. And he anticipated the method of more modern times in desiring to adopt his system of training to the different aptitudes of his scholars: only a very few, he thought, were worthy of a learned education; and the practice of conducting all through the same course of instruction ended in incumbering Church and State with a crowd of incompetent servants.*

The good Lancelot, in relating how St. Cyran thought the education of the young an "employment worthy of angels," "in which he would have delighted to pass his whole life," seems, though a teacher himself, to think that some apology is needed to save his master's dignity, and cites a list of Fathers of the Church who did not disdain this labour. St. Cyran had no such thoughts for himself: during all the last years of his life, the training of little children occupied a large part of his time and care: one after another, Singlin, Lancelot, Le Maître, De Barcos were engaged by him in this employment. He had a scheme for building a school, in which six chosen children should be educated under the care of a good priest, and a single master to teach Latin. This was necessarily abandoned when he was imprisoned at Vincennes, and two thousand livres which he had set aside for the purpose, were given to the poor. But his interest in teaching was not on that account intermitted. He managed during this

* *Vide* Lancelot, vol. ii. p. 330, *et seq.* "De la charité de M. de St. Cyran pour les enfants."

period to send several children to his abbey of St. Cyran to be honestly and piously brought up, and to persuade some of those disciples to whom his will was law, to take charge of others. He fancied that he should like to undertake the bringing up of children from their earliest infancy; to send to the frontier for some little ones, orphaned by the fortune of war, whom he might establish honourably in life, and whose prayers, as one who had stood in a father's place, he might enjoy. While he was at Vincennes, he adopted the son of a poor widow; kept the child in his room until the ill-temper of the governor's wife compelled him to send him away, and then provided a home for him at St. Cyran. The boy turned out badly; defied the efforts of all his teachers, and at last became a hardened thief. But as long as St. Cyran lived, he never gave him up. During the few months between his release and his death, he saw him every day. No occupation, not even his great work against the Calvinists, was suffered to interfere with this; "he would leave everything," says Lancelot, "to say some good word to him, or to try to bring him back to God."*

We have already seen that as early as 1637 †, Singlin had been persuaded by St. Cyran to take charge of two or three children; and had retired with them for a time to the then deserted valley of Port Royal des Champs. When he was recalled to make one of the little community which gathered about Le Maître in the courtyard of Port Royal de Paris, the work of education was not intermitted. We find recorded the names of several children, who at this time engaged the attention of Lancelot and Le Maître, and who, at St. Cyran's imprisonment, followed their masters to Port Royal des Champs. When after the visit of Laubar-

* Lancelot, vol. i. p. 133; vol. ii. p. 333. Fontaine, vol. i. p. 162, *et seq.*; vol. ii. p. 81, *et seq.*

† Vol. i. p. 152.

demont, they were driven from this resting place, it was with the parents of one of their pupils at Ferté Milon that the little company found an asylum. After their return to Port Royal at the end of 1639, Le Maître occupied himself in teaching two children, one a younger son of M. d' Andilly, the other of Madame de St. Ange; a task which he had undertaken in compliance with St. Cyran's wish. Little by little, some of the other solitaries who appear to have possessed an aptitude for the work joined in it; and pupils were not wanting. In 1643, M. Thomas du Fossé, a gentleman of Rouen, brought three of his sons to Port Royal, and placed them in the hands of a M. Selles, who cared for their intellectual training, and of M. de Bâcle, who watched over their religious and moral education. But still no regular system of teaching had been devised; and there was no organisation of school or college.* The youngest of the three Du Fossés, who maintained throughout his life a close connection with Port Royal, has left us an interesting account of the instruction which he received. "In regard," he says, "to the instructions which they gave us in matters of faith and piety, they were assuredly very different from those which some evil-intentioned and misinformed persons have published to the world. Our catechism was that which is entitled 'Théologie Familière,' printed with the royal privilege, and the approbation of learned men. They explained to us the principal articles of faith in a way that was simple and adapted to our capacity. They inspired into us above all things, the fear of God, the avoidance of sin, and a very great horror of falsehood. Thus I can say that I have never known persons who were more sincere, and with whom it was necessary to live with a more open heart. For they were enemies to every kind of concealment, and had deeply

* Lancelot, vol. i. pp. 35, 108, 111, 118—125, 287, *et seq.* Fontaine, vol. ii. p. 81. Du Fossé, p. 33. Conf. vol. i. p. 151, *et seq.*

graven upon their hearts that declaration of Scripture, which joins in the burning lake of fire and sulphur all liars with wretches and murderers.

"As to the statement which has been set abroad, that they taught us in the 'little schools of Port Royal,' that Jesus Christ did not die for all mankind; that God was not willing that all men should be saved; that the commandments were impossible of fulfilment, and other things of that nature, I should be to blame if I did not bear witness to their entire falsehood. I do not think that I ever even heard this kind of proposition spoken of during the whole time of my studies; except once, when a foolish and insolent almanac appeared in Paris, in which they were alluded to; or when the Constitution of Innocent X. which condemned the Five Propositions, was published in the Church. Those who imagine that these gentlemen had a plan for establishing a new doctrine, and that they kept schools with the view of instilling their opinions into those who were there taught, are very ignorant of their true character. Never were children brought up in greater simplicity than we, and those who came after us. Nowhere were these theological matters less spoken of than in our schools; and I dare assert, without fear of being contradicted by any of my schoolfellows who are still living, and engaged in the business of the world, that we knew much less about them than most of those who came from the public colleges of Paris."*

The schools early felt the shock of the troubles of Port Royal; for in 1644, while the Jesuits were expending their first rage on the "Book of Frequent Communion," it was thought well to send the children to Le Chênai, a house near Versailles, which then belonged to M. le Pelletier des Touches, one of St. Cyran's penitents, and through-

* Du Fossé, p. 49.

out the whole of a life, which stretched even into the eighteenth century, a faithful friend of Port Royal.* The storm passed away and the scholars returned to Port Royal only to be transferred in 1646 to Paris. The work increased upon the teachers' hands as well as their own capacity for performing it: many of their friends in the world eagerly desired the benefit of such teaching for their children, and the experience of the last few years had gradually grown into a system of education. A M. Lambert offered them a house in the cul-de-sac of the Rue St. Dominique d'Enfer, not far from Port Royal de Paris; where, for the first time, a regularly organised school was opened. There were four masters, MM. Lancelot, Nicole, Guyot, and Coustel, each of whom presided over a room which contained six scholars. M. Walon de Beaupuis, an excellent ecclesiastic of whom we shall have to speak more at length, superintended the whole. Every Sunday the boys attended vespers in the convent chapel, and heard Singlin's sermon. Those whose parents were able to afford it, paid an annual sum of 400 livres; which was augmented by a fourth, on account of the dearness of provisions, during the war of the Fronde. Some, however, received a gratuitous education.†

The establishment was sufficiently obscure and humble to escape any but very watchful eyes of suspicion. Even the name by which it was known, "Les petites Écoles de

* M. des Touches died in 1703, in his eighty-first year. I find in a note to Lancelot, vol. i. p. 337, an anecdote in connection with his name which shows the character of Louis XIV. in a better light than the Jansenist controversy usually throws upon it. M. des Touches had sent to the Bishop of Pamiers (Caulet, one of the Four), whose revenues had been sequestrated for his opposition to the king in the affair of the Régale, a present of 2000 crowns. The fact became known, and the king was pressed by many to imprison M. des Touches. "It shall never be said," was the reply, "that I sent any one to the Bastille for doing an alms."

† Du Fossé, p. 58—60, 90—94. Vie de Nicole, ch. iii.

Port Royal," seemed to disclaim any rivalry with existing colleges; although it must be confessed that the training given was sufficiently complete to render a recourse to the latter unnecessary. But Port Royal had already for some years been an object of suspicion to the Jesuits, who were not likely to see with equanimity this invasion of what they regarded as their peculiar province. In February 1648, La Mère Angélique writes to the Queen of Poland * that it was currently reported that the children in the Rue St. Dominique formed a religious order; that they observed a monastic seclusion; wore a uniform dress; had a chapel of their own; and were called the "Little Brethren of Grace." And indeed a commissary of police made a sudden inspection of the schools at this time, with no immediate result that we hear of. A change, perhaps in consequence of this visit, was again made about the year 1650. Du Fossé, with one or two companions, was sent under the care of a M. le Fèvre, to Magny; and thence, after about six months, to Port Royal, "not however to the Abbey as before, but to a farm which is upon the hill, called Les Granges." Others were sent to the Château des Troux, near Chevreuse, the house of M. de Bagnols; and others to Le Chênai, now the seat of M. de Bernières. It is not easy to speak with confident accuracy of all these changes; but the year 1653 may be fixed as that of the final and total removal of the schools from Paris.†

This division of the schools into three parts, each of which might reasonably be expected to attract less notice than the whole, was doubtless a measure of precaution. The establishments at Le Chênai and Les Troux assumed almost a private character; at the first the children of M. de Bernières, at the second those of M. de Bagnols, were

* Lett. vol. i. p. 360.

† Du Fossé, p. 99. Besoigne, vol. iv. p. 410. Fontaine, vol. i. p. 170, *et seq.*

being educated in their father's house; and to associate with them one or two companions of their own age could hardly be accounted a crime against Church or State. But the respite thus obtained was brief. At the beginning of 1656, the condemnation of Antoine Arnauld by the Sorbonne had crowned the triumph of the Jesuits; and the Pope had requested the king to disperse the hermit community of Port Royal. A letter from the treasurer of the Queen-mother's household to D'Andilly warned him of the approaching danger; and after a vain remonstrance, the schools at Les Granges were broken up, and the children, fifteen in number, restored to their friends. When, therefore, the Lieutenant Civil, M. d'Aubrai, appeared at Port Royal des Champs on the 30th of March, he found the buildings deserted except by two disguised priests, who successfully played the part of hard-working farm labourers. From Les Granges he went the same night to Les Troux. Here he found the three children of M. de Bagnols with only three or four companions, boys of good family, but unable to pay for the education which they owed to the charity of their host. Next day at Le Chênai, he met with a larger household; above twenty children inhabited a wing of the mansion, where their studies were superintended by M. de Beaupuis. And although all was smooth and fair-seeming; though the Lieutenant Civil and his companions were full of compliments, the schools received a shock from this visit which they never recovered. Parents began to ask themselves whether it was worth while, even for the sake of a good and cheap education, to confide their children to men, upon whom the shadow of royal displeasure so manifestly rested. The school at Les Granges does not seem to have reassembled. Those at Le Chênai and Les Troux maintained a feeble existence till March 10th, 1660, when M. d'Aubrai returned, and on the part of the king commanded their instant dispersion. M.

de Bernières was first forbidden to lend his house for such a purpose, and then exiled to Issoudun in Berri, where he died in 1662. M. de Bagnols was already dead; and the care of his orphan children was taken out of the hands to which he had committed it, and entrusted to a relative who was supposed to be free from the taint of Jansenism. No attempt was made to reconstruct the schools after the Peace of the Church.*

In this chequered existence of some twenty years' duration, the schools of Port Royal developed a system of education singularly in advance of the age, and produced manuals of instruction, some of which are not obsolete even yet. It is difficult to make even an approximate estimate of the number of pupils who were being trained at any given time. The schools were never, in the full sense of the word, public; the parents of the scholars were all friends of Port Royal, and any boy of doubtful or unpromising disposition was at once removed. M. St^e^ Beuve† from many minute indications, has come to the conclusion, that between the establishment in the Rue St. Dominique in 1646, and the final suppression in 1660, the number never exceeded fifty, and often fell short of it.

In the brief sketch which I have given of St. Cyran's maxims of education, I have anticipated much that needed to be said of the spirit which pervaded these celebrated schools. Their theory of training, like all the practical expressions of Jansenism, had its root in the doctrine of the Fall of Man. Every unbaptized child is an example of the corruption of human nature; and although the grace given in baptism restores it to a condition of acceptance with God, the old weakness remains, which, except it be counteracted by such strength as the Church by God's

* Rec. d'Utrecht, p. 234. Du Fossé, p. 129, 169. Besoigne, vol. iv. p. 411—413. Conf. vol. i. pp. 302, 304, 326.

† Port Royal, vol. iii. p. 393.

help can supply, will lead deeper and deeper into sin. Ordinary education not only does not check the evil tendencies of the heart, but even seems to strengthen them. Children are suffered to hear every kind of conversation, to read what books, to amuse themselves with what diversions they will; their natural inclinations to wrong fall in with the customs and judgments of the world; their teachers are too busy or too careless to contend with the sleepless vigilance of the enemy of souls; and the little ones not only become corrupt themselves but the cause of corruption in others. The only remedy for these things is a constant and prayerful watchfulness on the part of able and pious teachers. The work is in some respects painful; and can be adequately performed only by those who engage in it from motives of charity. It is difficult; and the number of teachers must therefore bear a larger than the common proportion to that of scholars.

As the great object of Christian education is to preserve in the child the image of Jesus Christ communicated in the sacrament of baptism, all occasions of worldliness and sin are to be avoided; and neither in the character of their teachers, in the conduct of their domestics, or in the general arrangements of the school, are the children to see anything inconsistent with virtue and innocence. The two great instruments of government are love and prayer; the masters are to be gentle, hopeful, forbearing; to grow insensibly into the affections of their pupils; and not even to use authority untempered by love. Prayer rather than speech, thought De Saçi, must be relied upon for the reform of any little irregularities; for only through prayer could the proper moment for speech become known. The soul was the first thing in this system of education; the mind only the second; to make brilliant scholars was a less desirable thing than to train up good Christians. As Singlin far more truly represents Port Royal than Le Maître

or Arnauld, so the characteristic result of the schools should be looked for rather in the character than in the literary achievements of their scholars. Yet the school which in so short a period produced Tillemont and Racine is above the reach of criticism on this side also.*

The manner of life in the schools is easily described. Five or six boys slept in the room of each master, who assumed the whole supervision of them. They had separate beds, desks, books; and sat in such a position as to be well under the teacher's eye, and yet not able to communicate with one another. Half-past five was the hour for rising, in which the master set the example. After prayers, work was begun and continued till seven, when the lessons thus prepared were repeated. Then followed breakfast; and work again till eleven, which was the dinner hour. During the meal some edifying book was read aloud, as in a convent refectory. Each class, headed by its own master, dined at a separate table. After dinner, the children, still under the supervision of their teachers, who never lost sight of them, played in the garden till one o'clock, when they were brought together into the hall for an hour's common instruction. From two to four the classes, now dispersed into their several chambers, were occupied in study; at four some refection, answering to our tea, was served out; then work again till supper, at six. Supper, like dinner, was followed by recreation in the garden till eight. From eight to half-past, the lessons for the next day were looked at; and then after prayer, in which the whole household, children, teachers, and servants, joined, all retired to rest together. The Sunday was, of course, otherwise apportioned. The children went to morning mass and to vespers in the parish church. The first service was preceded by catechetical instruction from

* Ste Marthe, quoted by Besoigne, vol. iv. p. 398, *et seq.* De Saçi, apud Fontaine, vol. ii. p. 391, *et seq.*

the superior; and after a longer play hour than usual, the afternoon was occupied in reading. An occasional half-holiday was spent either in the garden or in a walk.

The children were dressed alike, that there might be no difference between rich and poor. The healthy development of the body was cared for as well as that of the mind; out-door games of skill and strength were encouraged; and billiards, chess, and draughts were the resources of a wet day. Corporal punishments, frequent and severe in other schools, were here very rare: a look or a word sufficed to reprove slight faults, and those who showed grave defects of character which might prove hurtful to others, were at once removed from the school.*

To one who patiently studies the Jansenist memoirs of the time, many of the friends of Port Royal seem to group themselves naturally round the "Petites Écoles." We speak of Singlin in connexion with the internal life of the monastery: the biography of Arnauld is almost the history of the Jansenist controversy; Le Maître stands out from the rest of the Solitaries as a representative figure. So a certain number of grave and quiet men, who, for the rest, did not mingle in the more stirring transactions of our story, and were content with the lowest functions and obscurest places in the Church, were in the earlier portion of their lives connected with the schools, either as teachers or scholars, and spent their later years in literary labour, which, however honourable and useful, often brought little reward of fame to the labourer. Such was Walon de Beaupuis, the superior of the school in the Rue St. Dominique, and afterwards at Le Chênai; Lancelot, who was the chief author of the grammars, known as the work of MM. de Port Royal; Nicole, the partner of Arnauld's life-long labours; and greater than any of these, Le Nain

* Fontaine, vol. i. p. 262, *et seq.* 'Mémoire sur les Ecoles de Port Royal.'

de Tillemont, the accurate and impartial historian of the first six centuries of the Church.

Among these, Charles Walon de Beaupuis is, though the least conspicuous, not the least characteristic figure. He was born in 1621, the son of Nicholas Walon, Sieur de Beaupuis, Counsellor of the King at Beauvais, and of Dame Marguerite de la Croix, his wife.* The family, if the character of its intimate friends may be taken as an indication, was a religious one; and the young Beaupuis early showed signs of a grave and orderly disposition. The diocese of Beauvais was one in which the Jansenist doctrine was soon and firmly rooted: Godefroy Hermant, a famous doctor of the Augustinian theology, was a canon of the Cathedral and a professor in the college which flourished at its side. Another canon was that M. Manguelen, who afterwards retired to Port Royal des Champs, and for a few months before his death in 1646, performed the functions of director of the Solitaries.† Into the hands of the latter M. de Beaupuis fell, and received a bias which determined the whole future direction of his life. He had passed three years in the study of rhetoric at Beauvais, when in 1637, he occupied a fourth in listening to the instructions of Père Nouet in Paris. Then after a brief devotion to philosophy in another school, he went to sit at the feet of Arnauld, who, not yet admitted to the Sorbonne, was teaching in the College of Mans. This course was ended in 1641, and the young student transferred himself for the study of theology, to the College of Cluny, which was recommended to him by the half-monastic life led by its inmates. Here he was applying himself to the works of St. Augustine when,

* The life of M. de Beaupuis occupies nearly the whole of a volume, entitled "Vies intéressantes et édifiantes des Amis de Port Royal. Utrecht, 1751," to which I make this general reference.

† Vol. i. p. 215.

in 1643, the "Book of Frequent Communion" was published. In this, as in so many more instances, a smouldering fire was fanned into a flame; Manguelen fled to Port Royal des Champs, and in May 1644, De Beaupuis followed him.

About the same time arrived a more distinguished penitent, M. Litolphi Maroni, Bishop of Bazas, who was anxious to lay down his episcopal dignity and to work out his salvation in this holy desert. But the directors, who had no scruple in detaching less illustrious persons from the common round of duty, were probably unwilling either to take the responsibility of a bishop's resignation, or to deprive themselves of a bishop's influence in the Church: and so, after a time, sent M. de Bazas back to his diocese to introduce reforms accordant with his new theory of the Christian life. He asked Singlin for a companion who should aid and advise him in this work; and Manguelen was chosen. The latter at once gave up his canonry at Beauvais, and taking M. de Beaupuis with him, set out for Bazas. The reforms were hardly begun when the bishop died, and Manguelen and his friend were compelled to return. Perhaps the incident would be scarcely worth a record, had it not already been the second occasion in M. de Beaupuis' history in which the claims of a rigidly Catholic theory of life had come into collision with Protestant notions of filial duty. While a student at Paris he had made a "retreat," which, as is not obscurely hinted in the narration of his life, had hastened, if it had not caused, his mother's death. So now we are allowed to collect that the direction given by Manguelen to his career, was repugnant to his father's wishes; as it is certain, even from the apologetic account of his biographer, that the journey to Bazas was purposely and most disingenuously concealed from him. The student of the New Testament will remember that the attempt to make religious duty clash

with, and override filial obligation, is of older than Catholic invention.*

On his return from Bazas, M. de Beaupuis, now in his twenty-fourth year, finally resolved to adopt the theological profession: and not only prepared to take a Bachelor's degree, but received the four minor orders of the priesthood. The death of M. Manguelen, in 1646, which under some circumstances might have seemed likely to detach him from Port Royal, only bound him the more firmly to it; and in the following year he assumed the direction of the Petites Écoles, now established in the Rue St. Dominique. It is characteristic of his modesty—a quality which eminently distinguished the whole class of Port Royalists to which he belongs—that even now he takes no higher rank in the hierarchy than that of Deacon, and postpones to a much later period his assumption of the dignities and responsibilities of the priesthood. In 1653, he followed a part of the schools to Le Chênai, where M. de Bernières gave up a wing of his house for the accommodation of his children and their schoolfellows. And when, in 1660, the schools were finally dispersed, M. de Beaupuis first for a time continued his work as a teacher in the family of Florin Périer, Pascal's brother-in-law; and then in 1664, settled himself in his native town, where the Bishop, M. de Buzanval, openly favoured the now harassed friends of Port Royal.

Here in 1666 he was ordained Priest. There is something touching in the evident reluctance with which this man of forty-five years, whose whole life had been a struggle of unobtrusive duty, assumes the sacred office: he consents to take this step only after much reflection, and many solicitations of his friends, and even then, delays long before he enters upon his new duties. Henceforward, his

* Mark vii. 10.

life, for more than forty years, is a rare example of quiet holiness, of sober self-denial. It was not one of entire retreat; for he preached, heard confessions, was for some years superior of a convent of Ursuline nuns, and assisted in the management of the diocesan seminary. In 1679, his protector, M. de Buzanval, died, and was succeeded in the see by M. Forbin de Janson, afterwards cardinal, and known rather for his diplomatic than his ecclesiastical achievements. To the new bishop, Jesuit and Jansenist were alike indifferent, except as they stood on the sunny or the shady side of court favour; but he knew how to pay homage to Louis XIV., and De Beaupuis was at once interdicted from the performance of all sacerdotal functions. He retired to the house of his sister, a widow lady of Beauvais: "he had laboured," he said, "for the salvation of souls only in obedience to the repeated commands of the late bishop, and could not but rejoice when his Grandeur, dismissing him from all employment, placed him in a condition to enjoy the repose which he had always sought for." Nor was this an idle boast; his life was thenceforward his own, and he regulated it upon a model which excited the admiration, almost the pious envy of friends who would willingly have been condemned to the same happy inaction. He rose from his rude bed every morning at four; and the day was one long round of public and private prayer, till his bed received him once more at nine. His meals were always frugal, his fasts frequent; he rarely quitted his room except to go to church, and then went straight to his mark, looking neither to the right hand nor to the left. Even his deviations from the uniform course of habit were themselves uniform; at certain intervals he visited a paralytic friend; and once a year, on a fixed day, set out on a journey to Port Royal des Champs. He was sparing of his words, except to his intimate associates; and with them his conversation, though cheerful and even

gay, was chiefly on ethical or theological topics. Much of his time was spent in reading the Scriptures and the Fathers, though he would examine and animadvert upon such theology of the day as was sent to him for his opinion. He studied standing at a desk, with head uncovered and the window wide open. No fire was ever allowed in his room; he thought it enough for himself to put on a cap, and the "closing of the window," said M. Hermant, "was the only faggot which his friends need expect to see." His public charities were as regular as his feasts or fasts; but a pressing need or a shamefaced poverty could provoke him to a liberality, which in proportion to his means, might be called munificent. So flowed on the quiet current of his life, till, in 1709, it met the silent ocean of eternity. He had attained the patriarchal age of eighty-seven years.

He was not without his trials at the last; for he paid the price exacted of all who live to an extreme old age, in the pang of surviving many of those whom he loved best. Hermant, his teacher, Tillemont, his most cherished and distinguished scholar, as well as all the first generation of Port Royal, by whose side he had worked and knelt, died before him. No fewer than eight of his nieces embraced the religious life, two in Port Royal des Champs; and two nephews were monks in La Trappe, then under the direction of its celebrated founder. But in many cases the uncle, who had joyfully assisted at the beginning of the profession, sadly marked its close. Nor could even so inoffensive a life as his escape the cloud of royal displeasure which darkened upon everything connected with the hated community. It is a proof that Louis XIV. could be mean in his cruelty, that when De Beaupuis made a painful pilgrimage to La Trappe on foot, in order that before he died he might once more embrace his beloved pupil, Dom Le Nain, the sub-prior of the house, the

abbot sent him back with his errand unaccomplished, alleging in excuse for his discourtesy, the express command of the king. Perhaps one who could live and die like De Beaupuis might afford to despise even royal meanness. Not long before he died, his friends reminded him that his great age warranted and demanded some modification of his method of life. "My age," he answered, "is on the contrary a warning that I must double the guard." And in the midst of a season of distress and agitation which overtook him a few days before the last, he was overheard to say, "It seems to me, nevertheless, that God has given me grace to seek always, and above all things, that Sovereign Good which is none other than Himself."

As De Beaupuis, the director, represents the sober piety and severe morals of the schools, so Claude Lancelot, one of the first masters, forms the proper point of departure for the discussion of the books and methods of instruction, of which he was in great part the author. But although his literary activity was unwearied, he, even more than De Beaupuis, shuns the public gaze, and has left few materials for his own biography. His admirable memoirs of St. Cyran are silent in regard to himself as soon as he has explained the circumstances which attached him to his friend and patron; and the educational works by which he so greatly increased the reputation and the usefulness of the community, bear upon the title page the name of "MM. de Port Royal." I have before briefly narrated how, born in Paris in the year 1615*, he was educated for the ecclesiastical profession in the seminary of St. Nicholas du Chardonnet, and how, falling in with St. Cyran, he attached himself to the great confessor with an affectionate fidelity which gave colour and form to all his future life. With Singlin, Le Maître, and De Sericourt,

* Vol. i. pp. 152, 160.

he was one of the little company of hermits who lived in the outer court of Port Royal de Paris; and it was in the house of one of his earliest pupils, Vitart, that Le Maître found with him a refuge at Ferté Milon. After performing the last offices of friendship for St. Cyran in 1643, he became one of the community of Port Royal des Champs, where he seems to have occupied himself in teaching till, on the establishment of the schools in 1646, he assumed the charge of one of the four classes. The special subjects of his instruction were, we are told, Greek and Mathematics; while Belles Lettres and Philosophy were entrusted to Nicole. When the schools were removed into the country, he shared with Nicole the direction of the establishment at Les Granges, until it was broken up by the visit of the Lieutenant Civil in 1656. This event, however, did not altogether bar him out from the exercise of his powers as a teacher, for he undertook at Vaumurier the instruction of the Duc de Chevreuse, the son of that Duc and Duchesse de Luynes who had retired to Port Royal before the war of the Fronde. The pupil, who is a prominent figure in St. Simon's memoirs, long showed the effects of such an education, not only in a deep-seated aversion to the Jesuits, but in a genuine interest in matters of religion, which, though it did not take a specifically Jansenist direction, led him into the arms of Madame Guyon and the Archbishop of Cambrai. Then after a pilgrimage to Alet, the diocese of the good Pavillon, Lancelot was chosen in 1669, by De Saçi, to educate the two sons of the Princesse de Conti. This admirable woman, of whom I must speak more at length in another place, was the niece of Mazarin, the sister-in-law of Madame de Longueville and the great Condé, the widow of the Royal Prince who had been a leader in the second war of the Fronde. She had been brought with her husband, who died in 1666, under the influence of the Bishop of Alet; and the result had been

an entire remodelling of their lives according to the fashion of Port Royal. Now she was resolved to bring up her two young sons in the same way, and Lancelot was selected to be their tutor. A curious letter in which he recounts to De Saçi the way in which he adapted the methods of the Petites Écoles to Royal Highnesses is still extant, and may excite our admiration as well of the docility of the pupils, as of the independence of the teacher. All went well till the death of the princess in 1672. Then it was thought necessary to remove from corrupting religious influences boys who stood so near the throne; and a cause of quarrel with the tutor was soon found. He was requested to take his pupils to the theatre, and on his refusal, alleging his own scruples and their mother's known wishes, was summarily removed by royal order. The elder of the two died without issue at an early age; the younger lived to be not only Prince de Conti, but for a little while, king of Poland, and charmed by the grace of his manners and the liveliness of his wit even those who were unable to respect and admire his character. "Poor Lancelot," says M. Ste Beuve*, "he would have made a saint even of a prince, and lo! the result is an Alcibiades!"

With this, Lancelot's active life came to an end. He resolved to retire to the Benedictine Abbey of St. Cyran, over which M. de Barcos, the nephew of his benefactor, still presided. Here he remained till 1678, occupied in religious exercises, except during a brief and singular controversy in which he engaged with the learned Mabillon. St. Benedict had fixed the daily portion of wine for his monks at one "hemine;" at how much was this obsolete measure to be estimated? Doubtless a debate, which in some monasteries at least, threw all the difficulties of sufficient and efficacious grace into the shade! Lancelot,

* Vol. iii. p. 474.

with true Jansenist austerity, reduced the "hemine" to half the quantity allowed by Mabillon's more liberal interpretation; and the strife of tongues was waxing great when the original combatant, to avoid contention, quietly abandoned the field. In 1678, the reproach of heresy sought out even this unoffending recluse, and he was ordered to withdraw from St. Cyran to Quimperlé in Lower Brittany. He obeyed, and spent seventeen years of involuntary exile in the practice of the austere holiness which he had learned long before in the valley of Port Royal. He died in 1695, having reached his seventy-ninth year. The repeated requests of his friends had not prevailed with him to accept any higher rank in the Church than that of sub-deacon.*

It would be difficult to estimate the exact amount of improvement introduced by Port Royal into methods of education, without a more precise knowledge of other schools and colleges at the same period, than we possess. We are to some extent driven to conjecture from the statements of the Port Royalist teachers themselves, the points in which they differed from contemporary educators. There can, however, be no doubt that the latent Protestantism, if I may so call it, of the community, the power to deviate from established forms of thought and modes of action, displayed itself to the greatest extent in the management of the schools. They began from the principle then heretical, and not always orthodox now, "that children ought to be so helped in every possible way, as to make, if it may be, study more pleasant than play and amusement." So the old plan of giving to consonants names which did not express their syllabic value was abandoned, and a method adopted in its stead which is said to have been the inven-

* Besoigne, vol. v. p. 41, *et seq.* Life of Lancelot prefixed to the Mém. de St. Cyran. Fontaine, vol. iv. p. 274. St. Simon, vol. xii. pp. 215, 225; vol. xix. p. 150.

tion of Pascal. The children were allowed to pronounce the vowels and diphthongs by themselves, the consonants only in connection with these; and thus the difficulty and absurdity of compounding the sound *bon* of the three dissimilar sounds *bé*, *o*, *enne*, were avoided. Then—O, inconceivable perversity!—it had been customary to teach little children to read in Latin; to add to the difficulties which encumber the first attempt to translate signs into sounds, all those which would spring from the use of an unknown language. Port Royal made the bold innovation of teaching French children to read in the French tongue; and not only so, but went to the ridiculous excess of indulging youthful minds with reading books, apt to engage the attention and to spur the will to the task. Latin grammars were then (nor is the practice yet obsolete) written in Latin; and the pupils were compelled to learn the rules of the unknown language which they were about to study, in the language itself. The "Nouvelle Méthode pour apprendre facilement et en peu de tems la Langue Latine," by Lancelot, better known as the "Port Royal Latin Grammar," was written in French; and was the first instance in which the attempt was made to teach a dead through the medium of a living language. In other schools, even young beginners were exercised in written translation only, and were set to compose themes in a language which they very imperfectly understood; at Port Royal translation was *vivâ voce;* the teacher's voice, manner, comments helped to give life and motion to the old classic phrase, and to infuse a warmth of thought and feeling into the cold, dead words. French, were to a great extent substituted for Latin exercises in composition; and the result, we are told, was visible in that gradual emancipation of the modern from the restraints of the ancient tongue, which characterises the period known as the age of Louis XIV. The composition of Latin verse was imposed only upon those scholars who manifested some poetical

faculty; to others, the task could only be painful and productive of no result. But sometimes it was thought well to exercise a whole class in this way; the subject was chosen by the teacher, and each of the scholars was at liberty to suggest a word, a phrase, a turn of expression, as the inspiration of the moment might prompt. Idiomatic translations of several classic authors were made for the use of the schools, which, it is hardly necessary to say, were carefully expurgated.*

The study of the Greek language was much neglected in France during the seventeenth century, and the labours of Port Royal did not succeed in effecting more than a temporary revival. The Greek Grammar, which was, like the Latin, the production of Lancelot, is, as all grammars must be, to some extent a compilation from preceding works, but differs from most in the full and modest acknowledgment of its obligations. But the credit is due to Lancelot of having perceived that the Greek is much more similar in construction and spirit to any modern language than the Latin; and that the difficulties which beset the learner lie rather in the copiousness of its vocabulary than in the intricacies of its syntax. He discarded, therefore, the hitherto universally accepted plan of approaching the Greek through the Latin: his grammar is written, his translations are made, not in Latin but in French. A less successful book was a "Jardin des Racines Grecques," which was thrown by De Saçi into the form of mnemonic verses, which are often as barbarous as the etymologies which they contain are defective. Yet even this was not without its merits, as no French and Greek dictionary existed at that time; and the meaning of a Greek word could penetrate into the student's mind only through the medium of an inadequate Latin equivalent.

* Fontaine, vol. ii. p. 396.

Perhaps after all, the result of the Greek learning of Port Royal is most visible in the tragedies of Racine; though none would more sincerely have lamented than Lancelot and Nicole, that the same learning which enabled men to read the New Testament in the original, should help them to produce such profane masterpieces as Andromaque and Iphigénie.

The grammars which I have already mentioned, were accompanied by others from the same fertile pen. The Latin Grammar was first published in 1644, dedicated to, and if the traditions of Port Royal may be trusted, used by, the young king. The Greek Grammar did not appear till 1655. Both of these were also published in an abridged form. An Italian and a Spanish Grammar on the same plan, followed in 1660, and four Treatises on Latin, French, Italian, and Spanish Poetry, respectively, in 1663. Besides the "Garden of Greek Roots" which appeared in 1657, and many volumes of translations from Phædrus, Plautus, Terence, Virgil, and Cicero, which it is not necessary to specify more particularly, a selection of Epigrams (*Epigrammatum Delectus*) with a Latin preface by Nicole, was printed in 1659. A volume of "Elements of Geometry," by Arnauld, which had been long used in manuscript, was first given to the world in 1667, of which it is sufficient to say that Pascal, when he saw it, burned a little treatise on the same subject which he had himself compiled.

A comparison of dates will show that many of these works were not published till after the schools of Port Royal had been finally closed. They were the records and monuments of the teaching which had been there given; the instruments by which Lancelot and Nicole exercised their functions to a continually increasing extent, after they were driven from Le Chênai and Les Granges. It is not the first instance in which persecution has only

spread over a wider surface the influence which it was designed to extirpate.

The "Grammaire générale et raisonnée, contenant les Fondemens de l'Art de Parler, expliqués d'une Manière claire et naturelle, les Raisons de ce qui est commun à toutes les Langues et des principales Différences qui s'y rencontrent, et plusieurs Remarques nouvelles sur la Langue Françoise, 1660," stands on a different footing from the works already enumerated, as one of the first contributions to the science of general or comparative grammar which has since engaged so much of the attention of students. Arnauld and Lancelot are the joint authors. The latter, meeting with many difficulties in the composition of his several grammars, brought them to Arnauld to be resolved. He was so much struck with the philosophical penetration displayed by his master, that he obtained permission to throw his ideas, into the connected form in which the "Grammaire Générale" now appears. To attempt to criticise this once celebrated book would be out of place. The advantage of literary over scientific works is, that while the former are possessions for ever, the latter are continually left behind by the advancing wave of human knowledge; only the student of mathematical history can afford time to read the "Principia," while the "Paradise Lost" flourishes in perennial youth. So, however just might be the theory, however cogent the reasonings of the "Grammaire Générale," the facts upon which its inductions are based were necessarily few, and imperfectly known. Large families of languages, which are now objects of the grammarian's closest and most fruitful study, were then unknown; and the real affinities of those which were the subjects of comparison hardly suspected. When all these drawbacks are fully estimated; when it is allowed that the grammars of Port Royal have been long superseded by simpler and more scientific methods, that its etymology was not

in advance of the age, that its translations from the classics were periphrastic and unclassical, and that the schools cannot be said to have produced a Latinist or a Hellenist of more than average merit, the credit due to the modest teachers of the Rue St. Dominique remains unimpaired. Their improvements in the art of education have not been cast away as delusive, but have been carried to a higher pitch of perfection by the experience of succeeding generations. In no particular were they behind, in many far before their time. Their work, which began in the love of childhood, and in a deep religious respect for its comparative innocence, was conducted to the end under a sense of moral responsibility which introduced a new element into the relation between the teacher and the scholar. Nor do I know where else in that age to look for a modest yet dignified assertion of the worth of the teacher's office, a worth which society even now but partially recognises. And to the allegation that the schools of Port Royal produced no great scholars, the sufficient reply is, that their single object was the education of Christian men.*

The mention of the "Grammaire Générale" naturally leads us to its more celebrated companion, "The Port Royal Logic," a work, which, if we may judge from the fact that a recent English translation of it has reached a fourth edition, seems to defy the attacks of time. Its full title is "La Logique, ou l'Art de Penser, contenant, outre les Règles communes, plusieurs Observations nouvelles, propres à former le Jugement, 1662." The following account of its origin is given in the preface. A nameless "person of quality," talking one day to the young Duc de Chevreuse, "happened to mention to him that he had, when himself young, met with a person who in fifteen days made him acquainted with the greater part of logic." Another

* For the above account of the school books of Port Royal, I am greatly indebted to M. St^e Beuve, Port Royal, vol. iii. p. 413, *et seq.*

person, perhaps Arnauld, replied that if M. de Chevreuse would take the trouble, he would impart to him all of logic that was worth knowing in four or five days. The challenge was accepted, and an abstract of logical science drawn up, which the young duke, whose aptitude for acquiring knowledge is described as remarkable, easily committed to memory within the specified time. But the work grew upon the author's hands; MS. copies were circulated; then in 1662 it was printed. A second edition followed in 1664, a third in 1668, a fourth in 1674, a fifth in 1683, each of which successively was improved and enlarged. It was soon translated into Latin, in which language it was repeatedly reprinted; into Spanish, and into Italian. The first English translation appeared probably as early as 1685; another in 1716; and both went through more than one edition. A new translation, accompanied by an excellent introduction and notes, has of late years been made by Mr. T. Spencer Baynes.*

The "Logic" in its present shape, is preceded by two discourses "in which the design of this new Logic is set forth," and "containing a reply to the principal objections which have been made to this Logic." Both of these are from the pen of Nicole. The work itself is divided into four parts, of which the three first, according to Racine †, "were composed in common," while the fourth is altogether Arnauld's. Most of the additions made after the publication of the first edition are due to Nicole. At the same time, the book, both in its conception and the most important part of its execution, must be considered as having proceeded from the mind of Arnauld.

Its fourfold division is based on what are called the four principal operations of the mind, conceiving (*conçevoir*),

* Fourth edition, 1857: I am happy to acknowledge my obligation to Mr. Baynes' learned and perspicuous Introduction.

† Œuvres, p. 415.

judging (*juger*), reasoning (*raisonner*), and disposing (*ordonner*). In other words, the first part treats of ideas, the second of propositions, the third of syllogisms, and the fourth of method. But this general statement gives only a partial idea of the object of the work. There is nothing here, which, under certain conditions of treatment, might not be brought within the strict scope of a logical handbook. Our authors, however, take a wider than the ordinary range. Their second title, "The Art of Thinking," better expresses their intention than the first. "Logic," they say, "is the art of directing reason aright, in obtaining the knowledge of things, for the instruction both of ourselves and others." Its chief end, therefore, is rather practical than theoretical; not so much the analysis of the syllogistic or any method of reasoning, as, in general, the production of the "*mens sana*." The first preliminary discourse begins, "There is nothing more desirable than good sense and accuracy of thought, in discriminating between truth and falsehood. All other qualities of mind are of limited use, but exactness of judgment is of general utility in every part and in all the employments of life." They think that the efficacy of logic in producing this quality of mind has been much overrated. But the absurd pretensions in behalf of the science which have been put forward by scholastic philosophers, do not form a reason for rejecting the solid advantages to be derived from it; and therefore they have incorporated with their book a selection from the common rules. "Now," they proceed, "although we cannot say these rules are useless, since they often help to discover the vice of certain intricate arguments, and to arrange our thoughts in a more convenient manner, still this utility must not be supposed to extend very far. The greater part of the errors of men arises, not from their allowing themselves to be deceived by wrong conclusions, but in their proceeding from false judgments, whence wrong

conclusions are deduced. Those who have previously written on logic have sought but little to rectify this, which is the main design of the new reflections which are to be found scattered through this book." Accordingly, while all the technical part of the old manuals is not only to be found here, but is stated with a clearness, and illustrated by a variety of examples which are themselves characteristic of the book, its most valuable portions are undoubtedly those sections which approach the art of thinking from the moral or practical side, and treat of the "sophisms of self-love, of interest, and of passion," and "of the false reasonings which arise from objects themselves;" as well as the whole of the last part, which draws its inspiration from Des Cartes' celebrated "Discourse on Method."

To point out the particulars in which the "Art of Thinking," considered purely as a logical treatise, differs from previous treatises of the same kind, is a work which belongs to the historian of Mental Science. But we may be allowed to notice here its intensely practical treatment of what had hitherto, for the most part, been a merely formal and scholastic subject of study. It took up the series of pedantically expressed rules which were supposed to supply the only method by which the human mind could investigate truth; and on the one hand, found a base for them in the living metaphysical thought of the day, on the other, connected them with the whole procedure of science, and the conduct of daily life. The very illustrations introduced into the most formal portion of the whole, have shaken off the frost of ages of scholasticism. Generation after generation of pupils had repeated the old examples, some of which had descended from the time even of Porphyry and Aristotle; now for the first time we find ourselves in the regions of modern thought—in the sacramental controversies between Catholic and Huguenot—in the debate of "matière subtile," and the vacuum. The living French

is substituted for the dead Latin as the medium of instruction. The scholar whom the teachers of philosophy sought to train, was one who could argue accurately from given premises, in the syllogistic form, and was quick, by help of the same instrument, to detect the fallacies of other reasoners. The logician of Port Royal was the man of a sound and practised judgment; not ignorant of the subtleties of the schools, but accustomed to examine the soundness of his assumptions as well as of his arguments; and even if not a philosopher or a man of science, yet possessed of a philosophic and scientific mind.

It must not be forgotten that as far as Port Royal can be said to have a philosophy, it is to be found not in Pascal's "Thoughts," but in the "Logic." Arnauld, after some preliminary skirmishing with Des Cartes, had enrolled himself among his followers, and the "Logic," as well as the "General Grammar," is the legitimate offspring of the "Discourse on Method." On the other hand, the first Preliminary Discourse contains a fierce onslaught upon the Pyrrhonists, whom it summarily qualifies as a "sect of liars," and the chapter on "the Sophisms of Self-love" * halts in its argument to gibbet the vices and follies of Montaigne. The whole passage is so far removed from the calm and equal tone of the rest of the book, as to suggest the idea of a personal polemic against one, whose influence Port Royal had been unable to eradicate from the mind of Pascal. But in truth, Port Royal is not philosophical. Arnauld has a name among metaphysicians, Nicole among moralists, Pascal among religious philosophers; but the speculations of the three could not be united into one accordant whole; and no one of them was Port Royalist on his philosophical side. St. Cyran, Singlin, De Saçi, are, after all, our most characteristic figures; and

* Part. iii. chap. 20. § 6.

the Bible and St. Augustine, not Aristotle and the schoolmen, are the fountains of their wisdom.

We pass naturally from the "Logic" of Port Royal to one who had a large though an inconspicuous share in its authorship, Pierre Nicole. The figures of our story seem to arrange themselves in pairs: two friends connected by a strong tie of love and admiration, and yet to some extent, a greater and a less, a patron and a client. Such were St. Cyran and Lancelot; De Saçi and Fontaine; Tillemont and Du Fossé; Pascal and De Roannez; and especially Arnauld and Nicole. The activity of Arnauld is so interwoven with the main web of our narrative as to have made it hitherto impossible to detach it and look at it by itself; but that of Nicole is so much less original and independent, and in its last years so separates itself from the fortunes of Port Royal, as to invite and allow an estimate in this place. Once more, however, it will be necessary to anticipate in some degree the chronological order of events.

Pierre Nicole was born at Chartres, on the 13th of October, 1625, of a respectable legal or parliamentary family. His father, Jean Nicole, a man of considerable classical learning, himself laid the foundations of his son's education, which was continued in Paris, where, in 1644, he took the degree of Master of Arts. From his earliest boyhood he was a great, almost an indiscriminate reader; and his memory was so retentive as never to lose the impressions once made upon it. M. Ste Beuve* quotes from Brienne the following amusing description of Nicole's omnivorous appetite for books: —

"I should say of him, that no one whom I know has read so many books and narratives of travel as he; without counting all the classic authors, both Greek and Latin,

* Port Royal, vol. iv. p. 304.

poets, orators, and historians; all the fathers from St. Ignatius and St. Clement up to St. Bernard; all the romances from Amadis de Gaul to Clélie and the Princess of Cleves; all the works of ancient and modern heretics from the ancient philosophers to Luther and Calvin, Melancthon and Chamier, from whom he has made extracts; all the polemics from Erasmus to Cardinal du Perron, and the innumerable works of the Bishop of Belley; in a word, (for what has he not read?) all the writings of the period of the Fronde, all 'pièces de contrabande,' all treatises on politics from Goldast to L'Isola." He soon exhausted his father's library, and then betook himself to the stores of his friends. In after life, indeed, scandal said, that like another great reader, Coleridge, he sometimes forgot to return the books which he borrowed. The effects of this miscellaneous reading were, to some extent, corrected by the religious tone of his father's household. La Mère Marie des Anges, one of Angélique's earliest novices at Port Royal des Champs, and her successor at Maubuisson, was his aunt*; and one of his sisters, of whom he was wont to say that her natural powers surpassed his own, was educated in the same house. And the character of the future moralist of Port Royal is illustrated by an anecdote of this period of his life. His father's cousin, Claude Nicole, also a distinguished lawyer, had published a volume of poems, of which a licentious freedom of speech was not the least marked characteristic. The young theologian in vain endeavoured to work upon the author's sense of decency; the poems ran through several editions; literary complacency was too strong for morality, and the blot remained upon the religious escutcheon of the family. But after the poet's death Nicole, with consent of his daughter and representative, prevented the issue of a

* Vol. i. p. 48.

fresh edition, and bought every copy upon which he could lay his hands.

His original intention had been to pass through the theological courses of the Sorbonne, to take its degrees, and finally, to devote himself to the Church. Meanwhile he found employment in the schools of the Rue St. Dominique, and did not become Bachelor of Theology till June 1649. A few days afterwards, Nicholas Cornet, brought forward the Seven, which were the precursors of the more famous Five Propositions; * and as the debate waxed hotter and hotter, Nicole began to doubt whether it would be wise for him to assume a Doctor's dignity and responsibility in so divided a faculty. He was already connected with the obnoxious party by ties of friendship as well as of a common conviction; but then, to pause at this point would be to give up the possibility of taking orders, and therefore, all hope of preferment in the Church. The choice was soon made; he retired to Port Royal with the schools, and in conjunction with Lancelot, directed the establishment at Les Granges. Here, in 1654, Arnauld found him, and concluded with him that literary and personal alliance which lasted for a quarter of a century.

The moment was critical; the controversy had been decided against the Jansenists, for Innocent X. had issued his bull, and the French Bishops had all, after a protracted struggle, accepted it. The combat was about to become personal; in 1655, occurred the affair of the Duc de Liancourt, which ended in the expulsion of Arnauld, and all the Jansenist Doctors from the Sorbonne.† Pamphlet after pamphlet—some anonymous, some bearing the name of Arnauld; theological, controversial, personal,—appeared in rapid succession; and in all, Nicole, now once more in Paris, bore a large, though an unacknowledged part.

* *Vide* vol. i. p. 245.

† *Vide* vol. i. p. 253, *et seq.*

Then in 1656 and succeeding years, he furnished suggestions, quotations, corrections for the "Provincial Letters;" took a share in the Casuistical controversy to which they gave rise; and under the name of Wilhelm Wendrock, translated them into Latin.* From this period to the Peace of the Church in 1668, his literary activity continued unabated. The mere enumeration of the titles of his works would occupy more pages than one. Some have been already mentioned. The "Apology for the Nuns of Port Royal," which he wrote in conjunction with Ste Marthe; the "Lettres Imaginaires," the "Lettres Visionnaires," the "Treatise on Human Faith," against M. de Péréfixe. Whenever it is possible to catch a clear glimpse of his personality, apart from the tasks which he performed in conjunction with others, he is always on the side of concession and arrangement. One account attributes to him the famous but useless distinction between "fait" and "droit." He is against Pascal in that conflict of opinion to which I have made more than one allusion; he takes part even against Arnauld, in the treaty set on foot by the Bishop of Comminges.† To none, in all likelihood, was the Peace more truly welcome than to this practised controversialist.

From 1656 to 1668, Nicole was for the most part Arnauld's companion in his many hiding places. In 1658-9, indeed, while busy with the translation of the "Provincial Letters," he was absent in Flanders and Germany; but then returned, to share a concealment, which it is impossible not to believe, was more irksome than perilous. For a considerable period, they found an asylum in the house of Madame de Longueville, where, however, under an arrangement which was honourable both to hostess and guests, they insisted upon defraying their own expenses.

* *Vide* vol. i. pp. 285, 286. † *Vide* vol. i. pp. 358—419.

Other places of refuge, carefully recorded in the Jansenist memoirs, it is not necessary to enumerate here. As soon as the announcement of the Peace enabled the Jansenist leaders to appear in public, Nicole hastened to Troyes, where he was anxious, at his own expense, to establish a school for girls, and thence to the Abbey of Haute Fontaine, the head of which, M. Le Roi, had long been a friend of Arnauld and his party. Here he devoted himself for a time to the completion of his great work "La Perpétuité de la Foi."

The Jansenists, from St. Cyran downwards, had always been anxious to prove their orthodoxy, by the eagerness of their controversial zeal against the Calvinists. Even in the midst of their own troubles, they seem to have been always able to deal a blow at La Rochelle or Charenton; and strike at Jesuit or Huguenot with perfect impartiality and equal ardour. The history of the most famous of these polemical works may serve to illustrate the side of Jansenist activity which gave birth to them all. Le Maître, during the period of his retreat, had collected, as an introduction to the "Office of the Holy Sacrament," a number of passages from the Fathers, which the Duc de Luynes translated into French, and to which Nicole prefixed a short paper, proving that the faith of the Church in regard to the Eucharist had never undergone any change. A MS. copy of this paper fell into the hands of Claude, the celebrated Huguenot minister, who replied to it. In 1664, Nicole printed his little dissertation in an expanded form, adding remarks upon the animadversions of his opponent. This 12mo volume is known by the name of "La petite Perpétuité" to distinguish it from the larger work into which it afterwards grew.

Claude was not slow in publishing a reply, which appeared in 1665, and in three years reached a seventh edition. In

the meantime Nicole, under many difficulties and interruptions arising from the debates in the Church, had been working upon an elaborate and exhaustive treatise on the subject, the first volume of which he was able to complete at Haute Fontaine in 1669. It was entitled "La Perpétuité de la Foi de l'Église Catholique touchant l'Eucharistie," and was dedicated in a Latin epistle from the pen of Arnauld, to Pope Clement IX. Twenty-seven Archbishops and Bishops, as well as twenty Doctors, among whom was Bossuet, supported the work by their written approval. A second volume appeared in 1672; a third, which completed the work, in 1676. Clement X. received the dedication of the second, Innocent XI. that of the third volume, with many gracious words. Many of the first Protestant nobility of France, and among them Marshal Turenne, declared themselves converted by Nicole's arguments, and embraced the ancient faith. Jesuit and Jansenist were reconciled over the body of the Calvinist victim; there was even a rumour of a Cardinal's hat offered to Arnauld. And yet, as we have seen, the book, with the exception of the dedication, was not the production of Arnauld, but of Nicole. The whole affair is an illustration of the little esteem in which Port Royal held the rights of authors. No Christian man, it was believed, would consider himself or his reputation in the matter, except to rejoice, if by any means he could be preserved from temptations of self-love. So Nicole insisted that the name of Arnauld, a priest and doctor of the Church, should appear upon the titlepage of "La grande Perpétuité;" it was not fit that so great an undertaking should be supported by the authority of a layman like himself. And he considered it a fortunate thing, that both he and his friend were placed in a position which rendered the vanity of authorcraft impossible. For praise and compliment passed by the true author of

the work, to offer themselves to one who could not accept them for himself.

For some reason, now not easy to discover, Nicole seems to have been incapable of remaining long in one place, and soon left Haute Fontaine for Madame de Longueville's Hôtel in Paris. Again, after a few months, he removed to the Abbey of St. Denys, where Cardinal de Retz, the titular head of the foundation, permitted him to reside in the abbot's lodging. From St. Denys he went to Port Royal des Champs, whence we trace him, as he makes pilgrimages to the shrines of living and departed saints, to Angers, to Alet, to Annecy. These years, however, were far from being idle. The second and third volumes of the "Perpétuité" were written; the controversy with the Huguenot ministers carried on with unabated vigour; and the first four volumes of the "Essais de Morale" written and published. "Pierre Nicole," says Voltaire *, "was one of the best of the Port Royalist writers. What he wrote against the Jesuits is little read now-a-days; but his 'Moral Essays,' which are useful to the human race, will never perish. Above all, the chapter on the means of preserving peace in society, is a masterpiece, unequalled in its kind, in ancient literature." So the reader of Madame de Sévigné will recollect many passages of the "Letters," in which she speaks almost with rapture of this once famous book. Let the following be a sample †: "I read M. Nicole with a pleasure that carries me away; above all, I am charmed with the third treatise on the means of preserving peace among men; read it, I pray you, with attention, and see how clearly he displays the human heart, and how every one recognises himself in it,—philosophers, and Jansenists, and Molinists,—in short, everybody. This is what I call search-

* Siècle de Louis XIV., vol. i. p. 146.

† To Mad. de Grignan, Sept. 30th, 1671.

ing the heart to the bottom with a lantern; that is just what he does; he reveals to us what we feel every day, and which we have not the wit to distinguish nor the sincerity to confess; in one word, I never saw such writing as that of these Messieurs." And more than one English critic, finding in Nicole's moral speculations a neutral ground between the two churches, has praised them with a hearty appreciation, not too often manifested between Protestant and Catholic theologians.

The "Moral Essays," as they now stand, occupy no fewer than fourteen volumes of Nicole's collected works. But three of the volumes, included under the general title, consist of his life and letters; while five others are made up of reflections upon the Gospels and Epistles prescribed by the Church for the Sundays and holidays of the year. Of the six remaining volumes, only four were published, at various intervals, during his life; two others are a collection of moral treatises on different subjects and occasions. This statement sufficiently indicates the somewhat heterogeneous character of the volumes which form the nucleus of the work. They are so far from containing a system of ethics, as to be absolutely without a plan. Circumstance, or the conversation of some friend,—often, we are told, the good physician Hamon,—excited in Nicole's mind a train of moral reflection, the result of which was an essay. The subjects are the moralist's common-places: self-knowledge; human weakness; rash judgments; the fear of God; true greatness; and one among others, which sounds a little more piquant, on the means of profiting by bad sermons. They are treated from the theological and practical, rather than from the philosophical side; with more solidity, good sense, discrimination, than point or eloquence. An able and sincere man cannot write on such topics without saying much that is worthy of remembrance and reflection; and Nicole's style, like his thought, flows on in a

clear, strong, unruffled stream. But it is hard to understand Madame de Sévigné's raptures. To a modern reader, much of the "Moral Essays" appears, it must be confessed, somewhat dull. The critic would pronounce them sound and good, rather than attractive. They are among those books which are always more praised than read. And the Augustinian theology, which of course forms the framework of Nicole's speculations, never appears in a less lovely form than here. In Pascal, its horror is at least made grand by the fire and passion of his soul; the human nature which he displays to us is the nature of a fallen angel, and its misery has something of an epic dignity. But Nicole heaps image upon image, and exhausts all the resources of a cold fancy and, one almost suspects, of a not too warm heart, to express the mean wretchedness of man, and the eternal blackness of his fate. He makes us feel that Jansenism is endurable only when it is the religion of eager wills and tender hearts; that the single excuse for believing in the utter weakness and degradation of men, is the consciousness of a divine ardour to raise them above their woe.

In 1677, Nicole, weary as he was of controversy, had the ill fortune unwittingly to renew the Jansenist debate. Two bishops, MM. d'Arras and de Saint Pons, complained to the new Pope, Innocent XI., of some recent decisions of the Casuists, which seemed to them injurious to the cause of morality; and through the intervention of Madame de Longueville, borrowed Nicole's pure and forcible Latinity. The result was a royal intimation, transmitted through M. de Pomponne, to his uncle and Nicole, to the effect, that hitherto the King had been satisfied with their conduct; but that now complaints against them were frequent, and they were suspected of a desire to break the Peace of the Church. Nicole hastened to withdraw himself from Paris, and fixed himself at Beauvais, where the Bishop,

M. de Buzanval, had some years before presented him to a small benefice. But fate had more than one blow in store for him. He had three homes which he might fairly call his own; one at Paris in the Hôtel de Longueville, one at St. Denys, and one at Beauvais. But in 1679 Madame de Longueville, M. de Retz, and M. de Beauvais, died one after another; the persecution of Port Royal recommenced; and Nicole thought fit to fly to Brussels, where he was soon after joined by Arnauld. Persecution seemed to have reknit the bond which had been loosened by prosperity, when Arnauld was invited by Van Neercassel, one of the founders of the Jansenist Church which still maintains so anomalous an existence in Holland, to take up his abode in that country. All at once Nicole hesitated. He was getting old, and no longer able to bear the laborious and clandestine life which he must lead with Arnauld; he suffered from a chronic asthma, which the marshy air of Holland was likely to aggravate; he was ready to abandon controversy for ever, if for the rest of his days he might be allowed to live in peace. So he wrote a letter to Harlay, Archbishop of Paris, in which he explained his conduct in the affair of the two bishops, and alleging the quiet course of his life during the past ten years, declared that his only desire was to think of his eternal welfare, and to spend his time in study and prayer. Wherever he was, he would take the utmost care to avoid everything that could make a noise, or give the Archbishop any trouble. This letter was written in July 1679; but it was not till May, 1683, that after much anxiety and change of residence, which to one of his studious life and peculiar temperament involved considerable hardship, Nicole was suffered to come to Paris.

He soon found that in making peace with his enemies, he had run the risk of quarrelling with his friends. All the party of Port Royal had been so wont to see him act

as the companion and secretary of Arnauld, that the independent line of conduct which he now pursued appeared like treachery and ingratitude. Letter after letter poured in upon him, reproaching him because he was not as ready as ever to make himself a prisoner and an exile; because he was weary of controversy, and longed for some quiet cell where he might immure himself with his books and be at peace. The trial was very hard to bear; for he was sensitive to every breath of praise or blame that came to him from those whom he loved. He writes to his friend, Madame de St. Loup *: — "Since all the world stones me, and you do not differ from others in this respect, it would perhaps be well, Madame, to know how large are the stones which you throw at me; that I may judge whether it will be safe to approach you by a letter, and whether it may not draw down upon me some stone able to crush me at once; for you know that I do not willingly expose myself to blows, and have never professed to be brave." And then he goes on to compare the stones which lie all about him, to insults which he cannot throw back again at those who have cast them, since arguments are the only weapons which he is able to wield. The remedy which he used to procure some relief at least from excitement, is characteristic of the veteran author.† "These letters having prevented me from sleeping for nearly a fortnight, I had recourse to various remedies: I took emulsions, gruel, and at last opium more than once. All this having been without effect, I resolved to deliver myself from these thoughts by refuting all the arguments, pitiable as they seemed to me, which were alleged against me; and I composed a paper which was entitled 'Apology, &c.' I do not know what effect this paper had upon four or five persons to whom I showed

* Quoted by St^e Beuve, vol. iv. p. 369.
† Goujet, Vie de Nicole, p. 298.

it; but it certainly produced upon me the result which I intended, which was to restore my sleep to me, for it re-established me in my ordinary state." To all his correspondents, even to one who, writing from a comfortable abbey which he had managed to keep through all the Jansenist troubles, vehemently reproached him with his selfish love of peace and ease, he replied with unvarying good temper. Arnauld alone did not misunderstand him, but, at the moment when he most missed his friend's help and company, acknowledged his right to independence of action. He wrote to Nicole, in answer to a letter which he had received from him upon this subject*:—"I am obliged to you for having opened your heart to me. You could not do it to any one who has more sympathy with your troubles, and compassionates you more. And although I cannot always be of your opinion, I shall never pretend that you are obliged to be of mine, especially when the question is of entering upon engagements to which you may have too great a repugnance. I shall always be grateful for the help which you have afforded to me; but this does not give me the right to ask you for fresh help; and that God does not inspire into you the desire is enough to cause me to accept this privation as an order of His Providence." And then, after a calm discussion of the policy of Nicole's letter to the Archbishop, he concluded:—"We may fall into disgrace with our Lord for having failed to turn to account a talent which He has given us. The talent which you have of writing in Latin is very rare, and one that may be used to the great advantage of the Church, especially in a Pontificate such as this. You bury it in the ground when you show so great an inclination to mix yourself up in nothing. Excuse my heat; it is per-

* Lettres d'Antoine Arnauld, vol. iii. p. 148.

haps an ill-regulated zeal which makes me say all these things. It seems to me, nevertheless, that I have no other interest than that of God and the truth. Adieu, love me always, and be sure that I shall take no part in all the tittle-tattle of the world; and on whatever side you range yourself, the little pain that it may give me will never prevent me from looking upon you as my friend for death and life, consoling myself for your absence, if in no other way, by the words of St. Augustine: 'Quamvis non videamus nos oculis carnis, animo tamen in fide Christi, in gratiâ Christi, in membris Christi tenemus, amplectimur, osculamur.'"

But to those who reproached Nicole, Arnauld would not allow that his friend was at all in the wrong. He wrote to M. de Pontchâteau*:—"I learn by a letter from M. Nicole that his friends have allowed themselves to be terribly prejudiced against him on paltry grounds, and in regard to a matter in which he is entirely right. . . . . Is it not useful that he should be at peace in order that he may work for the Church? Is he not always doing this in one way or another? Is it not right that every one should act according to his gifts? Has he not rendered sufficiently great service to have earned our gratitude, and the right of not being treated as a slave, who is not at liberty to do as he pleases? He has very noble views, and of the last importance; and instead of entering into them, and giving him the means of carrying them out, you wish that he should apply himself to things for which he has no inclination; and because he does not do this, he is all but treated as a deserter. This has always appeared to me so unreasonable, that you must pardon me if I have not been able to restrain myself from opening all my heart to you upon this occasion." What better example of the magnanimity

* Lettres d'Antoine Arnauld, vol. iii. p. 176.

of love? The lonely exile, still fighting the almost hopeless battle of his truth and his party, with the infirmities of age quickly stealing upon him, sees the one companion upon whose help and society he had been wont to rely in former times of trouble, leave his side, to purchase rest by concessions which his conscience will not permit him to share. Yet his voice almost alone repels the charge of cowardice and treachery which is hurled against his weaker friend, and at the same time assures him of unabated love and honour, absent or present, in life and in death.

The period of rest which Nicole had so ardently desired lasted for twelve years. After one or two changes of residence, he fixed himself in some rooms which belonged to the convent known as that of La Crèche, and had a direct communication with its chapel. There was space for his books, and for a picture or two, on which he set great store; and the royal garden, in which he took his daily walk, was hard by. His manner of living was simple, yet not austere; he had a country house to which he retired in the summer months; and his friends, many of them among the most illustrious in the literary and theological circles of Paris, often filled his unpretending lodging. But rest with Nicole meant only freedom from anxiety, not abstinence from work. He wrote in these years two books of controversy against the Protestants, which unhappily did not render unnecessary the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. He assisted Arnauld in a metaphysical dispute with Malebranche; and then astonished the world by entering on a lively debate with his old colleague on the much debated, never exhausted topic of grace. Nicole had long desired, like most thoughtful and fair theologians, to find some middle point of reconciliation between the conflicting theories of predestination and free will; and now in his old age put forward a theory, of 'general grace,' which, while abandoning no Augustinian position, might also be accept-

able to Catholic, who were not Jansenist theologians. The attempt succeeded as ill as might be expected; the controversy passed away with as little fruit as many more which preceded and have followed it; and is noticeable here, only as showing that controversy, even on so exciting a topic, could be conducted with Christian candour and equability of temper. Nicole's relations with Port Royal des Champs, though not intimate, were never wholly intermitted. Perhaps there was something of timidity on one side, of distrust on the other. Yet he busied himself in editing the devotional works of Hamon, the physician of Port Royal, and prefixed an introduction to a memoir of his aunt, La Mère Marie des Anges, which had been prepared by a sister of the house. One would think that towards the end he must have felt somewhat lonely. He was among the youngest of his generation, and as they passed away one by one before him, may have been conscious of a secret separation of spirit which would add a fresh sadness to the sense of loss. In 1692, he writes to Arnauld, on occasion of the death of his brother, the Bishop of Angers *, "It seems to me as if I had been born in a church lighted by various lamps and torches; and that God suffers me to see them extinguished one after another, without the appearance of any new ones in their place. And thus the air seems to grow darker and darker, because we do not deserve that God should fill up the void which He Himself makes in His Church." Then, in 1694, Antoine Arnauld died; and in the next year Nicole,—last of the Romans, as his constant admirer, Madame de Sévigné, wrote of him,—followed in his seventieth year. His dying wish was that his heart should be taken to Port Royal des Champs, and there buried with that of his never estranged friend.

* Nouvelles Lettres, part ii. p. 227.

Nicole was not a Port Royalist of the purest blood. He had never known St. Cyran; indeed, his first theological performance had been a polemic against St. Cyran's nephew and successor, De Barcos. Although his aunt had been Abbess of Port Royal, and he had himself lived for some time at Les Granges, he nowhere appears as the close friend of the community. He had little of the spirit of party in his composition; and, but for the early bias given to his thoughts by Arnauld, might have employed his learning and ability for the general interests of Catholicism. He was the uniform advocate of moderation and concession. Except in the case of the "Provincial Letters," where the cause of Christian morality was concerned, he was adverse to any course that may appear violent and extreme. So, alone among the friends of Port Royal, he speaks slightingly of Pascal's "Thoughts:" of him alone the biographers have no stories of austerity to record. Moderation of thought, word, and life was the ideal at which he aimed. Many little traits of character and conduct remain to confirm this estimate. He was timid, sensitive, absent; would not go out in the wind lest the tiles should fall upon his head; dared not venture into a boat without a swimming-belt; was found standing at a clear crossing in the street, quietly waiting for the passage of some carts which had gone their way long before. He exaggerated in fancy the perils of his intercourse with Arnauld, and surrounded himself with a useless apparatus of precaution. When they lived with Madame de Longueville and passed several hours daily in her company, the great lady found Nicole the more gentle and pleasant of the two; he took more pains to amuse her than his sterner and more masculine friend, and had more talk fit for the ear of a princess. Yet he was one of those men whose mind cannot work with full energy, except with help of pen and paper; he was often overpowered in conversation by

those whom he felt to be weaker than himself in argument; and of a certain nameless doctor, was wont to say, "He beats me in my chamber, but I have refuted him before he has got to the bottom of the stairs." Arnauld made Nicole controversialist and Augustinian; left to himself, he concluded a peace with the court, and produced a theory of grace, which was certainly not Jansenist. Had circumstance thrown him into a Benedictine monastery, he might have emulated the peaceful industry of Mabillon; and spent the long years of a life, which must always have been simple, sweet, and innocent, in heaping up volumes of ecclesiastical lore, ignorant of all disputes but those which agitated the little world of his convent.*

A list of those who were educated in the schools of Port Royal would convey little information to English readers. The new methods of education were applied on too small a scale and for too short a time to produce any very startling result. Yet such a list would include the names of nearly all the younger Arnaulds; of the three brothers Du Fossé; of the two sons of Bignon, Avocat Général, one of whom succeeded to his father's office, and the other obtained high legal preferment; of M. de Harlay, the French Plenipotentiary at the Peace of Ryswick; of the Duc de Chevreuse, whose name has been already mentioned in connection with that of his tutor, Lancelot; of the nephews of Pascal; and of many more worthy scions of Parliamentary families, who in the latter years of the century preserved the memory of their place of education by the grave and austere spirit of their life and magistracy. It is curious to note among these the name of a younger son of the noble Scotch house of Lennox, who, adopting his French patro-

* For the events of Nicole's Life I am chiefly indebted to the Abbé Goujet, "Vie de Nicole;" which forms the fourteenth volume of his moral works. But I must also refer to M. St^e Beuve's elaborate sketch, Port Royal, vol. iv. p. 302, *et seq.*

nymic of D'Aubigny, entered the Church, became Canon of Nôtre Dame, Almoner of Charles II.'s Portuguese Queen, and died in 1665, a few hours before the arrival of a courier from Rome, who was bringing him a Cardinal's hat. A still more singular name is that of Charles II.'s unfortunate son, the Duke of Monmouth, who, in the time of his father's exile, was sent with his tutor to pass a couple of years (1658—60) at the house of M. de Bernières at Chênai.* But the two pupils of whom Port Royal is justly proud are Racine and Tillemont. The former will ask at our hands a separate and more elaborate treatment; and was besides, Port Royalist only in youth and old age, not in the hopes and strivings of manly life. His dramatic success was an offence in the eyes of his old teachers, and at one time brought him into open conflict with them; the contemporary memoirs hardly mention his name; and not till the second generation do the Jansenists seek to attract to themselves a glory reflected from his. But Tillemont is, from birth to death, the consummate example of the training of Port Royal. He never abandons the attitude of a pupil. When at the age of sixty his last illness begins to steal upon him, he will not go to Paris for medical advice till he has obtained the sanction of his aged teacher, M. de Beaupuis. He died a few days before his father, and was conscious of a humble exultation in the thought that he had never disobeyed him. In his will, he speaks of the holy education which God had provided for him at Port Royal,—"for which I bless Him with my whole heart, and for which I hope, through His mercy, that I shall bless Him throughout all eternity." His epitaph takes up the thought and declares of him that "sancte educatus, sancte vixit." But in no respect is Tillemont more characteristically the true child of Port

* Besoigne, vol. iv. p. 415, *et seq.* St^e^ Beuve, vol. iii. pp. 488, 489.

Royal than in the pious monotony, the austere obscurity of his life. A few words will exhaust all we have to tell of one, whose name the Church will not willingly let die.*

Sebastien le Nain de Tillemont, the son of Jean le Nain, Mâitre des Requêtes, and of Dame Marie le Ragois, was born at Paris, November 30th, 1637. His father was an old friend of Port Royal, and when, in the second war of the Fronde, the nuns were compelled to leave the Fauxbourg to seek refuge in the heart of the city, M. le Nain with M. de Bernières marched at their head.† The future historian, when between nine and ten years of age, was sent to the schools of Port Royal, which were then just established in the Rue St. Dominique. The child was father of the man. He showed at this early period not only the same character, but the same tastes as in after life. Livy was his favourite author; and it is recorded of him that he rarely laid the volume down till he had read an entire book. He passed through the course of classical instruction usual in the schools, and long before the publication of the "Art de Penser," was instructed in logic by its authors. The Annals of Baronius engaged his attention while he was still quite a boy, and gave occasion to innumerable questions, which he carried to Nicole. The latter, who was no mean proficient in ecclesiastical history, at first easily satisfied the applicant with an extemporaneous reply; but by and by, the difficulties proposed by the pupil became less easy of solution, and the master ingenuously confesses that he trembled at his approach. But before long, Tillemont became dissatisfied with any ecclesiastical history at second hand. At eighteen he began to study the Scriptures and the Fathers for himself, and arranged all the

* I have taken the facts of Tillemont's Life, when no other reference is given, from "La Vie et l'Esprit de M. le Nain de Tillemont" (1713), by his secretary, M. Tronchai.

† Vol. i. p. 226.

facts which he found there according to the plan of Usher's Annals, a book which he had read with much pleasure.

When, in 1656, the schools at Port Royal des Champs were broken up, Tillemont, with his friend Du Fossé and a good priest, in whose charge they were placed, retired to Paris, and, in a little house in the Rue des Postes, spent some four years in hard study. About Lent, 1660, the two friends removed to Les Troux, now empty by the death of M. de Bagnols and the final dispersion of the schools, in order that they might especially apply themselves to Church history, under the supervision of the learned curate of the parish, M. Burlugai.* But before long, Tillemont found it expedient to seek a refuge in the universal asylum of the Jansenists, the diocese of Beauvais, where the Bishop received him with open arms. Here he spent eight or nine years in quiet study, part of the time in the seminary, part in the house of M. Hermant. Already he was beginning to be regarded as one who possessed more than a common knowledge of the first ages of the Church; and his modesty was sorely wounded by the deference paid to his opinion by his superiors in age and ecclesiastical rank. At last, when M. de Beauvais, after having induced him to receive the tonsure, informed him that his greatest earthly consolation would be the hope of having him as the successor to his see, the modest student fairly fled, and with his father's permission once more took up his abode with Du Fossé in Paris.†

But life in Paris appeared too full of distractions to a student who divided all his time between his books and his devotions, and after two years he retired to St. Lambert, a village between Chevreuse and Port Royal. The Peace of the Church was yet fresh, and De Saçi lived undisturbed with his friends and the community of which he was the

* Du Fossé, pp. 131, 170.

† Conf. Du Fossé, p. 321.

head, in the old home in the valley. Hence he cast his eyes upon Tillemont, over whose conduct he had long had entire control, and whom he now resolved to train as his successor in the direction of the monastery. Year by year he led him up the many steps which conduct to the Roman Catholic priesthood, till finally, in 1676, Tillemont, now forty years of age, was ordained. His next act was to build for himself a modest dwelling in the court-yard of Port Royal des Champs, where it was his hope and purpose to end his days. But in 1679, before he had occupied his new home for two entire years, the second persecution began; De Saçi took up his abode at Pomponne, and Tillemont retired to the estate, about a league from Vincennes, from which he derived his name. Here the rest of his uneventful life was passed. Once he made a journey into Holland to visit Arnauld and the Dutch Jansenists. Once he was tempted to enter the active life of the Church, and accepted the curacy of St. Lambert, the village near Port Royal, where he had formerly lived. But this was the single occasion of his life in which he acted without asking his father's advice; and on hearing that M. le Nain disapproved of the scheme, he at once gave it up. Till his death in 1698, his life is one noiseless round of study and of prayer. In the words of his epitaph,—"a puero ad finem vitæ, unus semper ac sibi constans, quotidiè repetiit quod quotidiè fecit."

Tillemont laid it down as a fundamental maxim for the regulation of conduct, that the inconstancy of man could only be corrected by rigid adherence to a predetermined course and the formation of fixed habits. On this he modelled his own life. He rose every morning at half-past four; in Lent at four. He considered that his health and the work on which he was engaged, exempted him from the obligation to rise in the middle of the night to say matins. Throughout the day he was exact in reciting all the offices of the ritual, either in his own house or in the

parish church. He dined at noon, supped at seven, and retired to rest at half-past nine. After dinner he allowed himself two hours' relaxation, which he usually spent in walking; all the rest of the day, not thus accounted for, was devoted to his books. Even as he walked he was wont to pray and to sing psalms, and often joined in the simple processions of the village. He took great pleasure in church music, and sometimes attempted composition. In accordance with what he believed to be the practice of the primitive Church, he made pilgrimages to distant shrines, and always performed these journeys on foot, staff in hand, like a simple country priest. His conversation was grave and yet cheerful; he rarely spoke unless first addressed, and loved to turn the discourse to subjects of edification. He made no display of erudition in his talk; it was necessary to question him to find out that he was more learned than other men. Towards his inferiors in age or station he was always gentle and considerate; himself a child in spirit, his love of children was deep and tender. He would even have them present at public worship. "Their cries," he said, "are their prayers, and prayers to which God is not deaf." "They were the holiest part of the Church, and their presence would help to render its intercessions effectual." He liked to talk with the peasants and wayfarers whom he met on his journeys, and to leave with them some precious truth enshrined in an apt, but homely similitude. Of his servants he had an especial care, and occupied some minutes daily in their religious instruction. "They are as noble as we," he was wont to say, "and man owes to man no more than friendship." His charity was great. As soon as he had received his quarter's income, he laid aside a portion for the poor, which he entrusted for distribution to the Curé of the parish; and had besides many pensioners of his own to whom he made a monthly allowance. His biographer

records many ingenious methods which he used to stir up others to a similar liberality of almsgiving. His whole life was one effort of self-control, and his habits were very simple and frugal; but we do not read of any fasts or austerities which, measured by the standard of his own Church, could justly be called excessive. He writes to his brother, who was Sub-prior of La Trappe,—"Everybody is not obliged to fast as you do at La Trappe, but everybody is obliged to resist the desires of concupiscence, which pride and the remains of our corruption constantly excite in us, and to expiate the sins into which we thus fall."

The finer shades of such a character as Tillemont's could be appreciated only by one who lived with him and watched its slow development from day to day. Even so grave and monotonous a thing as Jansenist holiness differs from man to man; and the characteristic variations which are too slight to be embodied in their uneventful lives, or to be preserved upon the printed page, would be plain to the keen insight of love. Perhaps we shall not be wrong in fixing upon a very genuine humility, a shrinking modesty, a prompt self-distrust, as the qualities which form the keynote of Tillemont's character. His great work never began to appear till within a few years of his death, and was for the most part posthumously published. But long before this he had been labouring for others, and had been content to see the fruits of his erudition enrich the works of his friends. While he was at Beauvais, M. Hermant published lives of four Greek fathers, to which Tillemont largely contributed. He helped Du Fossé in the lives of Tertullian and of Origen, which were a prelude to his greater work on the lives of the Saints. When De Saçi undertook to write the "History of St. Louis," it was Tillemont who patiently accumulated the vast heap of materials necessary to the accomplishment of

the design; materials which he willingly transferred to La Chaise when De Saçi gave up the task. Even in regard to the book, which had been the labour of his life, he was equally self-denying. Some of his friends found fault with his plan. He could not, he said, conscientiously adopt any other, but he was willing to abandon the design altogether, and to place his collections at the disposal of any competent scholar. He hid himself from success, and would not read, even at his father's request, the favourable review of the first volume, which appeared in the "Journal des Savants." Nothing was so painful to him as a compliment; the only praise which he valued was the assurance that his book was not without a power of practical edification. He was humble to a fault in the reception of criticisms and corrections, and met the jealousies and asperities of rival scholars with anxious gentleness and self-forgetfulness. All the while he was not sure whether the edifice of learning which he was erecting for the Church, might not be an occasion of temptation to the architect. He was afraid that he took too much pleasure in his quiet and laborious life. He found it hard to quit his books even to go to prayer. He writes to De Rancé, the celebrated founder and Abbot of La Trappe*: "We love our work, and love it the more the greater it is, and the more it is of God. And we willingly believe too, that everything that can further our work is innocent, holy, and of God's ordaining,—*væ prægnantibus et nutrientibus.* Although my work compared with La Trappe is nothing, I yet feel how much I have to dread this woe, both in its production and in all its results. I find examples of this even among the saints. Forgive me, father, if I fear for you also, since the greatest saints are also men so long as they live in this place of trial." Among his meditations, too, we find the

* Quoted by Reuchlin, Port Royal, vol. ii. p. 427.

following*: "May I then occupy myself in my work with humility, or rather with confusion, as in a penance which I have deserved. If I discover anything, may I believe that I have received it from Thee; and may I not believe that I have received any great thing so long as I am not possessed of Thee, Thou Source of all truth! In beholding what Thy saints have done, have spoken, have suffered, may I gratefully and yet fearfully consider that this is a talent which Thou hast placed in my hands, that I may turn it to good account; and with this intent may I strive to obtain from Thee that which Thou didst give to them, or at least may I be confounded at the sight of my own weakness, which is so disproportioned to the teaching of Thy saints. If in this way only I applied myself to study, it would not puff up my spirit, it would not dry up my heart; I should be always disposed to leave it for reading yet more holy, and to present myself before Thee in prayer; I should not, little by little, and under various pretexts, extend the period of study to diminish the time due to other employments. If I laboured only to fill the place where Thou settest me, I should not be grieved when Thou changest that place by the different circumstances which Thou causest to arise."

Tillemont's "Ecclesiastical History" at present consists of two great but unequal portions: the "Histoire des Empereurs, et des autres Princes qui ont regné durant les six premiers Siècles de l'Église," in six, and the "Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire Ecclésiastique des six premiers Siècles," in sixteen volumes. This division of what is properly one work into a sacred and a secular history, was not a part of the author's plan. When the book in its original shape was sufficiently advanced, the first volume was put into the hands of a regularly appointed censor. He differed

* Réflexions Chrétiennes sur divers Sujets de Morale, p. 20.

from the author on several weighty points. Tillemont had ventured to assert that there was no evidence to prove the presence of ox or ass at the Saviour's birth; that the Magi did not arrive till after the purification; that Mary the wife of Cleophas might possibly be the sister of the Virgin; and the censor's zeal for historical truth would not permit him to sanction such misstatements. Tillemont, on the other hand, with a due sense of the dignity of his calling, refused to give way; and the publication would have been indefinitely postponed, had not some one hit upon the idea of publishing the secular history, which did not need the supervision of a censor, by itself. The success of this paved the way for the appearance of the "Ecclesiastical History," properly so called; a new and more accommodating censor was appointed, and the work was published in the shape which the author had given it. The first volume of the "History of the Emperors" appeared in 1690, and was followed, during the author's lifetime, by three others; the fifth was issued in 1701, the sixth not till 1738. The "Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire ecclésiastique," were published at intervals from 1693 to 1712; but of the sixteen volumes, only four appeared during the author's lifetime. The rest were edited by his faithful secretary and biographer, Tronchai.

Du Fossé* aptly describes Tillemont's design in these words: "wishing to give to the Church the original title-deeds of its history, he has taken care never to confound what he himself says with what is said by ancient authors." The work corresponds indeed to its modest title; it is a vast collection of materials for the history of the Church, brought together by unwearied industry, and displayed with unfailing honesty. Tillemont's criticism is that of his age and Church; his style is the clear, concise, but unadorned and monotonous style of Port Royal; he does

* Mémoires, p. 502.

not even attempt to unite his materials into a whole, and to describe the progress of the Church in a single stream of narrative as majestic as itself; still less does he aim at any philosophical breadth of view, which might comprise all the moral of his subject in one grand generalisation. But to read him is, according to those who have the best right to give an opinion, almost like reading the wide literature from which he draws his stores of fact; he "nothing extenuates or sets down aught in malice," whether it make for or against his Church. For some parts of the Augustan history, Gibbon thinks the study of Tillemont preferable to that of the original documents.* These compilations, he says in another place, spare him a too long and ungrateful search across the ocean of theological controversy, for they may "alone be considered as an immense repertory of truth and fable, of almost all that the Fathers have preserved, or invented, or believed."† And once more‡: "I applied the collections of Tillemont, whose inimitable accuracy almost assumes the character of genius, to fix and arrange within my reach the loose and scattered atoms of historical information." Many more such testimonies might be quoted, but they only repeat the praise of Gibbon, and cannot increase or diminish its value. It is pleasant to note how the book and its author correspond; how a modest and incorruptible truthfulness is characteristic of both.

Tillemont was in his sixty-first year when he died at Paris on the 10th of January, 1698. His father, who had reached a patriarchal age, survived him but a few days; Du Fossé, his schoolfellow and friend, died within the year. He desired to be buried at Port Royal des Champs, by the side of the eldest son of M. de Bernières, who had been

* Misc. Works, ed. Sheffield, vol. v. p. 266.
† Ibid. vol. iv. p. 591.
‡ Ibid. vol. i. p. 213.

his youthful companion. But the nuns esteemed the remains so confided to them too precious to be deposited in the place thus pointed out, and prepared a grave within the cloister on the left side of the choir. Thither, on the third day after his death, the body of Tillemont was sorrowfully borne; and on the morrow, clad in all priestly vestments and holding a crucifix in the dead hands, was reverently committed to the earth.*

His life had been very still; listen to the words in which he anticipates a rapturous silence as the true bliss of Heaven†: "If this inner piety which is peculiar to the Christian religion could be perfect in this life, it might perhaps produce a worship and an adoration wholly inward and spiritual like that of the angels. But that which it cannot do now, it will one day do in Heaven, where the saints will ceaselessly adore and praise God in divine songs which love will form in their hearts, with no interruption by a tumult of voices and transitory corporeal sounds, since there will be nothing there but what is immutable and eternal.

"There, being filled with God Himself and enjoying His truth by a contemplation full of light and warmth, we shall sing His praises, not in syllables which pass away before they are heard, and words as imperfect as the faith which produces them is obscure, but in a silence worthy of His greatness. All the passions which now tear us in pieces by so many different desires, all the various created objects which give us so many distractions in prayer, so many imaginations and thoughts, caused by the mobility and lightness of our spirits, all this will be silent then. Nothing will interrupt our silence; and our soul, all at one with itself, or rather with God, by a happiness which is the opposite of that outer darkness with which Jesus Christ

* Du Fossé, p. 500. Fontaine, vol. iv. p. 402.

† Réflexions Chrétiennes, p. 182.

threatens his enemies, will see only God, will hear only God, will enjoy only God, in short, will love only God. This is the happiness which God promises to us. This is the secrecy and silence towards which faith causes the soul which it animates to aspire: and which it enables it, as it were, to anticipate by continual groanings of heart.

"Give us, O God, this inner piety which will produce in us both prayer and all other outward actions of virtue, and which will end in that eternal praise which our hearts will render to Thee in Heaven, amid the silence of all created things."

III.

THE FOUR BISHOPS.

We have already had sufficient opportunity of determining the relation of the Jansenism of Port Royal to the theory and practice of the monastic life; it may not be so easy to define the method in which it would deal with the difficulties of those who were unwilling to forsake the world, and yet anxious to do their duty in it. The Jansenist is, in this respect, the most logical form of the Catholic doctrine. There is no certain way of conquering life's temptations; the Christian's only resource is to fly from them. The monastic is the ideal form of the Christian life; the human race would expire in the act of consummating its own perfectness. Perhaps the severest fanatic of modern times has never kept steadily before his eyes all the necessary consequences of his theory; and Roman Catholicism, at least, has always been sufficiently indulgent to the worldly propensities of its disciples. Port Royal is no exception to the general failure in consistency, and so to the last numbered as many friends without as within the cloister. But it never ceases to hold up the superiority of the solitary life, to bewail the hard fate of those whom imperative duty detained amid the distractions of the world, and to inculcate the necessity of periodical retreat and self-examination on the part of those who would make their peace with God. We can nowhere trace the existence of a theory of the secular life, which, by help of earthly work and love, should keep an uninterrupted intercourse with Heaven. Port Royal is content to leave in the

world only those whom it cannot win for the cloister; and these, on the single condition, that the home shall as much as possible resemble the cell.

It is a necessary consequence of the troubles and controversies of the party, that the types of character which have hitherto presented themselves to our view have a certain monotony of colour, which only the vividness of spiritual life preserves from being sectarian. St. Cyran, Arnauld, Singlin, Nicole, De Saçi, even to some extent, Pascal, are engaged in the same debates, perform the same work, struggle with the same difficulties; work and difficulties being other than they might have been, had Jansenism not been treated as an incipient heresy, and Port Royal as a nursery of schism. This similarity of purpose, and effort, and character, which partly grew up from within, and was partly forced upon the Jansenists from without, explains, if it does not justify, the constant accusation of their enemies, that they formed a party in the bosom of a Church whose theory does not admit the existence of parties. Nor can we escape, so long as we remain within the circle of our subject, from the prevalence of the Port Royalist type. It moulds, with more or less completeness and consistency, the characters of all who acknowledged the personal influence of the long line of confessors of the community. But to complete our knowledge of it, we must watch it upon the field (by us hitherto unsurveyed) of ecclesiastical duty; and in the lives of the Four Bishops note how Port Royal would have governed the Church.

The prelates, who, at the most critical moment of the struggle, interposed to shield Port Royal from the united violence of King and Pope, were Nicolas Choart de Buzanval, Bishop of Beauvais; Henri Arnauld, Bishop of Angers; Étienne François de Caulet, Bishop of Pamiers; and Nicolas Pavillon, Bishop of Alet. That their firm

resistance succeeded at last in procuring the Peace of the Church, may be partly due to the known sympathy of many more of their episcopal brethren, partly to the character of the new Pope, Clement IX., but in a still greater degree, to their own exemplary virtues. Public opinion, which is slow to distinguish between minute differences of doctrine, quickly notes contrasts of conduct; and in days when princes of the Church emulated the princes of the world in dissoluteness, it weighed much in favour of Port Royal that every bishop who was suspected of Jansenist leanings was pious, self-denying, poor, a haunter of his diocese, an encourager of sound learning, a relentless foe to ecclesiastical abuse. The difficulty of my subject is, that in the memoirs which remain, I can hardly trace the features of four individual men. In the words of an author from whom the facts of my story are chiefly taken*, "I must warn my readers of a kind of monotony of very similar things which they will find in the lives of these four great Bishops; it will always be a penitent life, zeal for the salvation of souls, good government of the diocese, charity towards the poor, love of simplicity, poverty, frugality; synods, episcopal visitations, missions, and so forth. If some readers apprehend weariness of this uniformity of virtues and good works, they may be reassured beforehand by the thought that the historical events which compose the mass of these lives form a variety which leaves no room for weariness, and that if there is a repetition of virtues, there will be none of the facts which prove them."

Nicolas Choart de Buzanval, the son of Théodore Choart and Madeleine Potier, was born at Paris, July 25th, 1611. His family on both sides, had held high offices in

* Vies des Quatre Evesques, engagés dans la cause de Port Royal: pour servir de Supplément à l'Histoire de P. R. en six volumes (par Besoigne). 2 vols. 1756. Preface, p. 3.

Church and State; two of his maternal uncles preceded him in his see. He lost his father when he was fifteen years of age, and his education was chiefly directed by his uncle, Augustin Potier, Bishop of Beauvais. His elder brother had chosen the profession of arms; the younger had to make his election between the law and the Church, and decided in favour of the former. At the age of twenty, he became Counsellor of the Parliament of Brittany, but not being old enough to practise, went to Italy in the suite of the Maréchal de Créqui, Ambassador of France at the Holy See. Here he remained some time; then on his return applied himself diligently to his profession, in which he gave fair promise of excellence. After awhile a brilliant prospect of political advancement seemed to open before him. When, in 1643, Louis XIII. died, his uncle, the Bishop of Beauvais, was Almoner and Confessor of the Queen. Richelieu had preceded his master by a few months, and the question of all-absorbing interest about the court was, who was to play the part of Richelieu during a long minority and with a female regent. The Bishop, who, if we may trust De Retz*, had a better heart than head, entered upon the struggle for power; the Queen made use of his influence with the Parliament to procure the recognition by that body of her sole regency; and perhaps promised him, certainly gave him reason to hope for, the succession to Richelieu's ministry and Cardinal's hat. In the meantime the other ministers, eager to pay court to the rising star, nominated Nicolas Choart Ambassador to Sweden, and everything was prepared for his journey when the bubble broke. Mazarin had already established that personal supremacy over the Queen's mind which afterwards gave rise to so many scandalous stories; the Bishop of Beauvais was banished to his diocese, and the ambas-

* Mémoires, p. 37.

sador expectant sent back to the dull routine of legal practice.

Augustin Potier retired to Beauvais a wiser, if a disappointed man, for the last seven years of his life were spent in the diligent discharge of his episcopal duties. Yet a taint of the court lingered about him still. He conceived the idea of resigning his bishopric, which was not only very wealthy, but carried with it the dignity of a peer, in favour of the nephew whose political advancement he had failed to secure. Our biographers tell us that Nicolas Choart had already given up the law; but it is permitted us to infer that he had not taken this step without an eye to possible promotion in the Church. The family job was cleverly and successfully effected. The President De Novion, was also a nephew of the Bishop of Beauvais; and as it was now the period of the Fronde, when it was important to the Queen to conciliate the Parliament, agreed to use his influence in behalf of his cousin on condition that a pension of 12,000 livres, in favour of his own son, should be charged on the revenue of the see. Nicolas Choart was ordained priest at the right moment; his uncle resigned the mitre; and a royal decree made the new ecclesiastic, now forty years of age, Bishop of Beauvais. Congratulations flowed in upon him from all sides, and not least from the chapter of his cathedral. But the representatives of that body, two grave and reverend dignitaries, seeing that their new bishop bore his episcopal responsibility very lightly, ventured to remind him of what he had undertaken, and to recommend his perusal not only of the Scriptures, but of works of St. Chrysostom and St. Gregory upon the priesthood. He had the good sense and good feeling to act upon their advice, and soon grew uneasy at what he had done. The simoniacal arrangement made by his cousin, which he now learned for the first time, sharpened the stings of his conscience, and for a while his

fixed resolve was to resign his ill-gotten dignity, and to devote himself to the service of the Church as a simple priest. At length the advice of those to whom he referred his difficulties, prevailed with him to give up this intention, and he was consecrated on the 8th of January, 1651. But no consciousness of the faithful discharge of duty ever obliterated from his mind the feeling of shame at the manner of his first entrance upon it; and, but for the Bishop of Alet, he would some years before his death have abandoned his diocese and retired to the Chartreuse.

The life of the Bishop of Alet will afford the best opportunity of entering upon the details of episcopal administration, which, under different modifications, characterised every diocese fortunate enough to be governed by a Jansenist prelate. In the case of the other three bishops, it will be necessary to select only those marked peculiarities which were produced either by the circumstances of the case, or the bent of their own disposition. Like his brethren in the resistance to the Formulary, M. de Beauvais was ascetic, prayerful, charitable, rarely left his diocese, and exercised a vigilant personal superintendence upon every part of it. But he was specially distinguished by the pains which he took in the education of the priests, whom he afterwards instituted to the parishes under his care. He gradually introduced into the College of Beauvais learned and pious teachers, under whose management it became so flourishing as to attract scholars from all the surrounding country, and even from Paris. From it the aspirants after ecclesiastical position passed into the Seminary, an institution founded by Augustin Potier, but enlarged and first firmly established by his nephew, for theological studies alone. The students, who entered at the age of twenty-one, passed three years in preparation for the priesthood. Of these the first was a year of probation, and the course was indefinitely lengthened whenever it

seemed desirable. All the scholars, who generally numbered forty, were lodged, fed, and taught at the Bishop's expense. As much pains was taken to form the habits and the character as to instruct the mind; the day from a quarter past four A.M. to bedtime, was an almost uninterrupted round of study and of prayer. The subtleties of scholastic theology were neglected in favour of those great truths and principles which ought to form the staple of a parish priest's teaching; and the students were especially encouraged to read the Scriptures and the Fathers. To pass through the seminary was the only way to ordination in the diocese of Beauvais; the Bishop neither accepted nor refused candidates for the priesthood, except in concert with the superiors. At the same time he was personally acquainted with the students, almost lived at the seminary, and himself conducted all the examinations. He was conscientiously strict in his institution to parochial charges; and if he were asked for a benefice, looked upon the request as reason enough why it should be refused. His liberality and tenderness to the young priests whom he had educated were those of a father, and they, on their part, cheerfully submitted themselves to his will.

It was in part owing to the seminary, that when the troubles of Port Royal began, the diocese of Beauvais was a refuge for the Jansenists. I do not find recorded the way in which the Bishop first became connected with the unpopular party; but we have already seen* that in 1664, two of his near relatives were nuns in Port Royal de Paris. Almost at the commencement of his episcopate, he had maintained his Jansenist convictions under very difficult circumstances. His chapter had ventured, in 1653, to publish the bull of Innocent X., with a *mandement* opposed to that which he had drawn up in somewhat cautious terms;

* Vol. i. p. 391.

and a controversy arose, between the majority of the canons on the one side, and the Bishop with a faithful minority on the other, which dragged on its weary length till the Peace of the Church in 1668. Throughout the whole of this period, the Bishop maintained his ground against treason within, and royal and papal menaces without; and afforded an asylum beneath the walls of his cathedral to more than one persecuted Jansenist. The first superior of his seminary was Nicolas l'Évêque, one of the priests who, upon his nomination, had so faithfully reminded him of his episcopal responsibility; the second was M. Walon de Beaupuis, who continued at Beauvais the work which he had begun in the schools of Port Royal. MM. Haslé and Hermant, well known in their day as Jansenist doctors, were teachers of theology; and Tillemont was at one time an inmate of the seminary, and, in the Bishop's own hopes at least, the destined successor to his see.

But the Bishop of Beauvais was also Count of Beauvais, Peer of France, and a great territorial lord, with an extensive secular jurisdiction. His manner of life was nevertheless the simplest possible; and the vast unfurnished halls of his palace proved that the abundant income of the see was not spent to procure ease and luxury for the Bishop. The amount which he set apart every year for fixed objects of benevolence was almost incredibly large; a great hospital for the aged and sick poor, as well as for orphans, owed its origin and chief support to his liberality; and in the famine of 1662, he would have sold his plate to supply the wants of the distressed, had not the city refused to permit the sacrifice, and offered to raise the requisite funds. In the management of the episcopal estates, he was gentle and forbearing; and it is recorded as an example of rare kindness, that he permitted his farmers to keep the game within due limits. Before his time, the magistracies of the county had been put up to sale by the Bishop, as supreme

lord; M. de Buzanval professed himself willing even to buy upright judges, if they could be had, and abolished an abuse which was destined to keep its hold on the nation at large for a century more. He made it a matter of conscience to be accessible to every man, and to hear in person the complaints of his vassals and fellow-citizens; while his dignified courtesy won from the nobility of the province a respect, which his other virtues might have failed to secure. He added to the character of the Faithful Bishop that of the Christian Gentleman. When in 1679, he died, aged sixty-nine, he had almost completed the twenty-eighth year of his episcopate.

The Bishop of Angers claims our especial interest as an Arnauld: Henri, the second son, and sixth child of Antoine Arnauld and Catharine Marion. He was born in 1597, and was destined to succeed to his father's practice at the bar; though long afterwards, when he had distinguished himself in the service of the Church, it was remembered that Francis de Sales had predicted this great change in his life.* We are not informed of the circumstances which led M. de Trie — as at this period of his life Henri Arnauld was called — to abandon the practice of the law, on which he seems to have entered, or of the preparation which he made for entry into the Church. When M. Arnauld the elder died, the great families for whom he had acted as agent offered to continue their connection with his son; but the offer was firmly declined by D'Andilly on his brother's behalf. Still we hear nothing of any such ardour in the cause of truth and piety as distinguished the entrance of Antoine Arnauld into the priesthood. The time of worldliness for the Arnaulds is not yet quite passed; and Henri Arnauld, instead of seeking some village cure, or drawing eager crowds round a metropolitan

* Mém. pour servir. vol. i. p. 152.

pulpit, sets out in 1620 in the train of the returning nuncio, Cardinal Bentivoglio, for Rome. There he lived for five years in the Cardinal's house, exciting high expectations of the part which he was afterwards likely to play, as an ecclesiastical diplomatist and minister.

Although called the Abbé Arnauld, he does not seem to have taken orders till, during his stay in Rome, the King gave him the Abbey of St. Nicholas at Angers. On his return, a canonry in the cathedral of Toul, together with the dignity of archdeacon, was added to this preferment; and shortly after he was chosen Dean of the same chapter. When in 1637 the Bishop of Toul died, Henri Arnauld was unanimously elected by the chapter to the vacant see, and at the same time received the King's assent to his nomination. But a difficulty arose with the Pope, who claimed the right of naming the Bishop of Toul; and the election was never carried into effect. The Abbé de St. Nicholas remained for some years longer a political churchman; and in 1645, was sent to Rome to conduct some delicate negotiations with Pope Innocent X. His errand was one which hardly accords with the conception of ecclesiastical purity, entertained at Port Royal. The last Pope, Urban VIII., who was a Barberino, had enriched his nephews with a shamelessness of nepotism, up to that time unknown even at Rome. At the accession of Innocent X., the two cardinals Barberini attempted to stand their ground. Mazarin had risen to his height of power by their help, and now endeavoured to throw over them the protection of his government. But the facts were too patent, and after a few months, the cardinals, with their brother Taddeo Barberino, in whom Urban had tried to found a new Roman family, fled to France. It was to negotiate their return that Henri Arnauld was sent for the second time to Rome. The story of his success, and of many other negotiations which he carried on with the minor princes

of Italy, may be read in five volumes of his despatches, which his great nephew, the son of Pomponne, published in 1748.*

The year 1648, in which the Abbé de St. Nicholas returned from Rome, may be taken to represent the most flourishing period of Port Royal. It was that in which Angélique Arnauld led back a colony from the house of Paris to their long deserted home; the hermit community was numerous and peaceful; the Five Propositions had not been invented, and the voice of calumny was yet low and powerless. And while in 1649, Henri Arnauld was in retreat at Port Royal, the bishopric of Angers was offered to him, no doubt as a political reward for political service. He accepted it; and in June 1650, was consecrated in the convent church of Port Royal de Paris. It is hard to think that his brothers and sisters did not feel the incongruity of his diplomatic churchmanship with their own theory of the ecclesiastical life; I can find no trace in their correspondence of the exultation which such an event might otherwise have been expected to excite. Angélique, at the new Bishop's express desire, came from Port Royal des Champs to witness his consecration, but she spent the whole time of the ceremony in solitary prayer for him on whom so heavy a charge was laid.† And she writes to a friend, —the only mention I find of the event in the letters of the Arnaulds,— "It is not my brother D'Andilly who is Bishop of Angers; it is M. de St. Nicholas. *You* are well pleased, and I am deeply grieved, fearing lest he should succumb under so terrible a charge, in a time when the disorders of the Church are so terrible. I beg you to pray God, that He may have pity upon him."‡

* Reuchlin, Port Royal, vol. i. p. 183. Mémoires de l'Abbé Arnauld, p. 512, *et seq.*

† Mém. pour servir. vol. i. p. 250.

‡ Lettres d'Angélique Arnauld, vol. i. p. 531.

D'Andilly tells us* that his brother's retreat at Port Royal was only the prelude to his final retirement to his Abbey at Angers, where he intended to pass the remainder of his life in exercises of piety. However this may be, the new Bishop's conduct testified to his possession of the strong and earnest character of his family; he applied himself to the business of his diocese, with the same resoluteness as Angélique had set herself, thirty years before, to rule her unwilling nuns. As soon as he was consecrated, he set out for Angers, and during an episcopate of forty-two years, never quitted his diocese but once, and that, to aid in the conversion of a Protestant nobleman of high rank. His life was ascetic; his labours incessant. He allowed himself but four hours' sleep, and even this brief period of repose was often broken by prayer. He exercised a personal superintendence over his clergy; and was at all times accessible to every one who wished to see him. The country house of the bishopric was only two leagues from Angers, but he had held his see many years before he visited it; "a bishop" he said, "who wishes to do his duty, makes no journeys except to visit every part of his diocese." And when his friends pressed him to set apart one day in every week for rest and relaxation, he replied, that "he would gladly do as they wished, if they could find him a day on which he was not a bishop." †

It would answer no good purpose to narrate the progress of the greater and the lesser controversies in which the Bishop was involved during his long residence at Angers; to describe his visitations, to count up his alms, to note his austerities. We have seen already, that as became one of his name, he firmly upheld the cause of Port Royal in the debate of the Formulary; though rather with the mild persistence of Agnès, than with the more fiery earnestness

* Mémoires, p. 419.

† Conf. Du Fossé, p. 295.

of Angélique or Antoine Arnauld. He would have acquiesced in the Subjicimus *; and joined with D'Andilly in recommending the compromise to their more controversial brother. He may have felt justifiably unwilling to peril his station and influence in the Church for so slight a distinction as that which Antoine made the ground of his continual resistance; he had to answer to God for his diocese, and would fain finish the work which he had begun. We may conjecture, then, that he heartily welcomed the Peace of the Church, as giving him the opportunity of yet a few years' labour in the cause of Catholic truth and discipline. He was already above seventy when the Peace came; and could hardly foresee that he was destined to survive the event almost a quarter of a century, and to witness the renewed gathering of the storm. We hear of him twice in these latter days from Madame de Sévigné. She writes from Angers, on the 21st of September, 1684, "I have dined, as you know, with the holy prelate; his sanctity, joined with his pastoral vigilance, is an incomprehensible thing; he is a man of eighty-seven years of age, and sustained in his constant fatigues only by the love of God and of his neighbour. I chatted an hour with him in private, and found in his conversation all the vivacity of mind which characterises his brothers; he is a prodigy which I am delighted to have seen with my own eyes." And again, on the 8th of July, 1685. "I have been a witness of this prodigy; I have received the benediction of this holy man, and have kissed his hand with extreme pleasure. It is admirable to note how all his diocese fears to lose him, and to see in his place some fellow who will think only of pleasing the Bishop's enemies; instead of which his sole thought is of forgiving all the affronts which they delight to heap upon his old age." Du Fossé,

* Vol. i. p. 421.

who visited Angers in 1691, gives us the last glimpse of the good Bishop, now blind, and struggling with the weaknesses of extreme old age. He describes, as a touching sight, the sadness with which he gave his benediction to the candidates for ordination, who were about to seek the sacrament, which he was now unable to impart, in another diocese.* His mind was still clear, his charity as ardent as ever. It was a proverb in Angers, that to be recompensed by the Bishop, it was only necessary to do him some wrong; and few could die in peace without his blessing. The end came on the 8th of June, 1692, when he had attained the patriarchal age of ninety-five years. He left no property behind him; and in giving directions for his burial in an obscure part of his cathedral, commanded this simple epitaph to be placed on his grave: "Here lies Henri Arnauld, Bishop of Angers." His long life was almost contemporary with the History of the Reformed Port Royal. He was two years old when Henri IV. conferred the coadjutorship upon the little Angélique; and the monastery was rased to the ground within twenty years of his death.

The name of the Bishop of Pamiers, Étienne François de Caulet, introduces us to the second great controversy which, in the seventeenth century divided the Gallican Church. Two of the four bishops, who in the cause of Jansenism withstood both Pope and King, now in the affair of the Régale, leagued themselves with the Holy See against the whole power of the French Church and State. As the struggle was not without an indirect influence upon the fortunes of Port Royal, and is singularly illustrative of the peculiarities of Roman Catholicism in France, it may receive a brief treatment in this place.

The Bishop of Pamiers, like his brethren of Beauvais and

* Du Fossé, pp. 412, 430.

of Angers, was of parliamentary family, not without its pretensions to noble descent and station. He was born in 1610, at Toulouse, where his father was President of the provincial parliament. Étienne de Caulet, after passing through the hands of a private tutor, was sent to the Jesuits' College, and then under the charge of M. de la Fond, Abbé de Foix, to Paris. Here, while he was studying at the Sorbonne, his preceptor, with a generosity, the precise motive of which remains unexplained, resigned the Abbey of Foix in his favour. No austere scruples, arising from a Jansenist or any other source, prevented his acceptance of the gift; and we may gather from the cautious admissions of his biographer, that the young Abbé de Foix was not less worldly than other ecclesiastics of his rank and age. The poison could not however have penetrated very deeply into his nature; for a strong impression was soon after made upon him by an ascetic preacher, who then furnished lively religious sensations to the congregations of Paris; and the remonstrances of his father did the rest. He put himself under the direction of the celebrated Père Condren, General of the Oratory, who fanned the flame of religious zeal already smouldering in his heart, prepared him for ordination, and directed his energies to missionary labour.

In this the Abbé de Foix was not alone. A number of young men, whose history and circumstances were not dissimilar to his own, had felt Condren's influence, and were now engaged in the work of preaching, not without striking evidence of success. But before long, a division of opinion arose among them; some wished to continue the work in which they were already engaged; others to establish a seminary for the training of preachers and parish priests. The difference was referred to Père Condren, who decided that each party should endeavour to serve God in the way that seemed to them best. The leader of those who inclined to the seminary was the Abbé Ollier;

with him went Caulet, and one or two others. Their first attempt was unsuccessful, the second met with a better fate. The Curé of Saint Sulpice, a parish on the outskirts of Paris, was old and no longer able to do his work; but struck with the evident piety and earnestness of the young recluses, offered to resign his cure to them. An exchange was finally effected: the Abbé Ollier gave up to the old man a priory which he himself held, assured him, in addition, an annuity from the revenues of the parish, and became Curé of Saint Sulpice. Here he and his friends once more set to work, and founded an institution which still flourishes in unimpaired usefulness.

The energy and ability of Étienne de Caulet in this new situation attracted before long the favourable notice of Vincent de Paul, who was often consulted by the Queen-mother in the disposal of bishoprics. About the end of 1643 the Bishop of Pamiers died; and the Queen wished to bestow the see upon some member of the new congregation of St. Lazare, which Vincent de Paul had founded. The founder, more anxious for the humility and simple-mindedness of his new order than for its ecclesiastical honour, put away the perilous favour, and besought that it might be conferred upon his friend the Abbé de Foix. The Queen readily assented; but not the Bishop designate. He was sincerely unwilling to undertake episcopal responsibilities; and his leader, the Abbé Ollier, fearing for the prosperity of the new institution, eagerly dissuaded him. At length, after three months' delay, the importunity of the court, and the advice of more disinterested friends, prevailed; and he was consecrated in March, 1644. But the Abbé Ollier never forgave him.

Pamiers, a suffragan bishopric of Toulouse, is a city of Languedoc, pleasantly situated on the river Auviège, which, taking its rise in the Pyrenees, flows into the Garonne. To this remote region M. de Caulet retired to

spend thirty-six years in the unintermitted discharge of episcopal duty. The diocese was in a woeful state. The Huguenots had more than once got the upper hand in Pamiers, and compelled the last Bishop to take refuge with his clergy in the neighbouring town of Foix. Even the historian who records the violence of the Protestants, which, he alleges, had spared neither ecclesiastical life nor property, admits that the ignorance and immorality of the Catholic clergy were scandalous. The cathedral and bishop's palace, which stood at a little distance outside the gates, had been wholly demolished. The Bishop began his work of restoration by establishing his own household according to an approved model; he dispensed with the services of a pompous train of domestics: the few servants whom he kept were men of tried character; two or three virtuous ecclesiastics aided him in the transaction of business, and the management of his family; all was regularity, sobriety, simplicity, not only in appearance, but in spirit. The whole house was like a monastery; and the Bishop was foremost in the austere uniformity of life, which he required of all who lived with him. From four in the morning to nine at night, the day was occupied in public or private prayer, in the business of the see, and in the study of the Scriptures and the Fathers. Twice a year he made, in company with the canons of his cathedral, a religious retreat; and every year exchanged a fortnight's visit with his friend and neighbour the Bishop of Alet. Being joint Seigneur with the king of the city and diocese, he made provision for the administration of justice by choosing magistrates, to whom, instead of selling, he gave their offices; and by establishing regulations of police, the character of which betrayed their ecclesiastical origin, and which were not always sustained by the parliament of Toulouse. He founded a seminary for the education of priests, held synods, visited his diocese from parish to

parish. With help of his sister, Catherine de Caulet, widow of the Baron de Mirepoix, who belonged to one of the most ancient families in Languedoc, he established girls' schools in every town and village. Little by little, after encountering a long and harassing resistance, he reformed the chapter of his cathedral: compelling the canons, who, in the troublous times of the last Bishop, had thrown off almost all ecclesiastical restraint, to live together, simply and soberly, and to apply their superfluous revenues to Church purposes. Towards the Huguenots, who were numerous in Languedoc, the Bishop held a high hand. In open defiance, we must suppose, of the Edict of Nantes, he seized their church, appropriated it to his own purposes, and obtained a decree from the civil power, which, by forbidding any Huguenot to sleep in Pamiers on pain of a fine, practically expelled the whole Protestant population. We hear much of his humility, his indifference to the world, his lavish almsgiving; but there is an air of cold and unloving austerity about even his virtues, which prepares us for his biographer's statement, that while he lived the people honoured more than they loved him, and found out many of his good qualities only when he was gone.

It is time that we turned from these details to the two great controversies in which M. de Pamiers took a prominent part. In the earlier years of his episcopate, he was so far from having any Jansenist leanings that he would not suffer the doctors of Port Royal to be so much as named in his presence; and the Bishop of Alet, who was wont to have the "Book of Frequent Communion" read to him as he sat at table, substituted some other work during his friend's annual visit. The good Pavillon had impartiality enough not to sign the letter asking for a condemnation of the Propositions which the bishops addressed to Innocent X. in 1650, and sufficient influence with his friend to induce

him also to withhold his signature. Little by little the eyes of the Bishop of Pamiers, thus saved from committing himself, were opened. He heartily joined in the condemnation of the "Apologie des Casuistes," in 1657. While he was thus enlightened as to the theoretical morality of the Jesuits, he saw the practical operation of their system in the obstinacy with which they thwarted the plans of M. d'Alet for the good of his diocese. Still his was a case of gradual conversion. When the Formulary was first published, he yielded to the solicitations of his early friends, and offered no open opposition to it. It was only after a time, when one or two of the protesting prelates had given way, and as if to show that the final resistance offered to the king was a matter not of cabal but of individual conviction, that the Bishop of Pamiers took the position by the side of his brethren of Beauvais, Angers, and Alet, from which he never afterwards moved.

The Peace of the Church was concluded in 1668; the debate of the Régale began in 1673. An effect and token of the modified independence of Rome claimed by the Gallican Church, was the right exercised by the King of France of appropriating the revenues of all vacant bishoprics, and of nominating, during the vacancy, to all benefices within the diocese not having cure of souls. But this right, known as the Régale, was admitted not to extend to the provinces of Languedoc, Guienne, Provence, and Dauphiné, until, in the year above mentioned, Louis XIV. published an edict stretching his claims over every cathedral church in the kingdom, except one or two which had special grounds of exemption. The bishops of dioceses which had not been hitherto subject to the Régale were, by the same instrument, required to take an oath of fealty, in default of which the King would consider that he had the same right to nominate to vacant benefices as if the see were not occupied. The clergy for the most part bowed to the

royal will; Caulet of Pamiers and Pavillon of Alet "unhappily," says Voltaire*, "the two most virtuous men of the kingdom," resolved to defend the rights of the Church. The struggle soon began: in 1675 Louis intruded a nominee of his own into the diocese of Alet, in 1677 into that of Pamiers. Then followed an interminable succession of letters, protests, appeals; the King maintaining his rights, the bishops defending every foot of ground with equal inflexibility.

The situation was a strange one. The same parties were engaged in this conflict as in that of the Formulary, and yet had changed their relative position in a way which reminds us more of the ever-shifting combinations of worldly statesmen than of the steadfast policy of a Church which lays claim to immutability. Then, the Pope, the King, the Jesuits, and the majority of the French clergy had been all on one side; on the other, only the Jansenists and some undefined force of public opinion in society and the Church. Now, the two Jansenist bishops stood alone with the Pope. The King drew to his party the overwhelming majority of the Gallican clergy, always more jealous of papal than of civil supremacy, and now deeply leavened with the servility of the age. "Were the King to turn Huguenot," said the Prince de Condé, "the clergy would be the first to follow him." The Society of Jesus forgot their old allegiance to the chair of Peter in their personal hatred of the Jansenist bishops. The Pope found the most strenuous defenders of his rights in the very men whom more than one of his predecessors had treated as heretics. Before long the quarrel had intertwined itself with the tangled thread of European politics. Louis and the Jesuits openly espoused the cause of James II.; Innocent XI. at least secretly favoured the undertaking of

* Siècle de Louis XIV. vol. ii. p. 300.

William of Orange. "Men said," reports Voltaire*, "that to put an end to the troubles of Europe and the Church it was necessary that King James should become Protestant, and the Pope, Catholic."

The Bishop of Alet died in 1677, having by his age and virtues escaped any active persecution. The whole weight of resistance now fell upon Caulet, who, an "Athanasius contra mundum," did not blench. All the temporalities of his see were seized, and his request that this measure might not be allowed to interfere with the usefulness of his seminary or the rebuilding of his cathedral, scornfully disregarded. Everything was taken, even a few faggots which were found in the palace, and the produce of a little garden of potherbs. But the curés of his diocese at once collected and sent to him 600 livres; others bought him a pair of mules for his litter, that he might still visit the villages in the mountains; and many laymen vied in the supply of his wants. He had recourse to the Pope; and Innocent XI., mild and gentle as he was, showed no want of firmness in upholding his cause. But the end was not far off; and the King knew it. He could afford to wage war with something like moderation against two Bishops, each of whom had passed his seventieth year. On the 8th of August, 1680, the Bishop of Pamiers died, after having ruled his church for thirty-six years. Henceforward the King could address himself to the struggle with the Pope, undisturbed by the thought of dissension in the Gallican Church.

This is not the place for more than the briefest account of the subsequent progress of the controversy. The French clergy, in their successive assemblies, supported the King in strong and still stronger declarations; till in that of 1682, they adopted the famous "Four Articles," the Bill

* Siècle de Louis XIV. vol. ii. p. 302.

of Rights of the Gallican Church. The first declared that "kings and sovereigns are not subject to any ecclesiastical power, by God's order, in temporal things; that they cannot be deposed directly or indirectly by the authority of the heads of the Church; that their subjects cannot be released from the submission and obedience which they owe to them, or be absolved from their oaths of fidelity." The second maintained the decrees of the Council of Constance against the absolute supremacy of the Pope; the third affirmed the inviolability of the Gallican usages. The fourth went still further, asserting that the decisions of the Pope were not incapable of amendment, until confirmed by the universal assent of the Church. Innocent retaliated by refusing bulls to any ecclesiastic present at the assembly of 1682, who had been subsequently raised by the King to the episcopate; Louis once more rejoined by prohibiting all newly appointed Bishops, whether parties to the adoption of the "Four Articles" or not, to apply to Rome for their bulls. So from year to year the quarrel grew more bitter. In 1689, Alexander VIII., in 1691, Innocent XII., ascended the papal chair. New occasions of offence continually embittered the original dispute; and the whole weight of the papacy was cast into the scale of European policy, adversely to the influence of France. Thirty-five French Bishops were at last, in default of the Pope's sanction to their appointment, unable to perform any episcopal function: the King had seized Avignon, a part of the papal territory, and imprisoned the nuncio; the Pope, on his side, had excommunicated the French ambassador. Only one step more was necessary to complete the schism, and that, it was reported, Louis was ready to take. Men were beginning to look for the erection of France into a separate Patriarchate, independent of the see of Rome, and the nomination of Harlay, Archbishop of Paris, as the first Patriarch, when all at once the King gave way. It was

all-important for him to detach the Pope from the great combination, which under William III., threatened the European supremacy of France. The Bishops designate, who had not been concerned in the adoption of the "Four Articles," were permitted to solicit and to receive their bulls from Rome. Those who were more guilty in the eyes of the Pope made a private, individual, equivocal submission, and were canonically installed. The King withdrew the edict, which rendered instruction in the doctrine of the "Four Articles" compulsory in all schools and colleges. Still the victory, though indisputably on the side of the Pope, was not without its drawbacks. The "Four Articles" had been publicly adopted: they were never publicly repudiated. The obligation was not replaced by a prohibition to teach them, and they remained the doctrine of a large part of the Gallican Church. Once more it was seen that a clear and honest settlement of a Roman Catholic controversy is an almost impossible thing.*

The Bishop of Alet is the true Jansenist Saint. His virtues were more patent to the world than St. Cyran's, his life contemporaneous with the troubles and glories of the party. He was not one of the little knot of friends and kinsfolk who formed the nucleus of French Jansenism, but had been reared in an independent and half hostile school of theology; so that while, on the one hand, the Port Royalists magnified him as a convert, he did not attract, on the other, the bitterest rancour of their enemies. He belongs more to the Gallican Church at large, and less to a sect or party in it, than any of the famous men whom we have yet encountered; those who were swayed by the most opposite theological prejudices united in revering his virtues, and if he had not been a Jansenist, he might have been a saint.

* Guettée, Histoire de l'Eglise de France, vol. xi. book ix. chaps. i. ii. iii. Ranke, History of the Popes, vol. ii. p. 419, *et seq.*

There are many saints in the calendar, who could with advantage be displaced, to make room for St. Nicholas of Alet.

Nicolas Pavillon was born at Paris, in the year 1597. His family was respectable, though not noble; and his father and mother kept a grave and pious household. The boy, destined from his earliest years to the service of the Church, was sent to pursue his secular studies in the college of Navarre, where, while yet in the lowest classes, he received the tonsure. Once more we come upon the trace of the incurable irregularity of the Roman Catholic Church. The parents of Nicolas Pavillon, who are described as sober, God-fearing people, had not seen any impropriety in providing for their son, by procuring for him a canonry in the Cathedral of Condom, which, by and bye, was exchanged for an annuity chargeable on its revenues. When, in later life, a severer theory of ecclesiastical morality convinced the annuitant of the wrong to the Church involved in such an arrangement, he at once gave up his claim.

While yet young, Pavillon fell under the influence of St. Vincent de Paul, who was then founding his celebrated congregation of the Mission. The ardent philanthropist undertook the young man's spiritual direction, invested him with some degree of ecclesiastical authority by giving him sub-deacon's orders, and employed him in teaching and catechising in the prisons of the capital. The sermons of St Francis de Sales, when on his second visit to Paris in 1618-19 *, completed the impression made by Vincent de Paul: and when the elder Pavillon wished to follow up the canonry of Condom, by buying for his son the office of Royal Almoner, the young man refused, alleging that he wished to pass his life in preaching the gospel to the poor. It was perhaps from the mistaken idea, that for this work a complete and scientific

* Vol. i. p. 90.

study of theology is unnecessary, that he declined, in opposition to his father's wishes, to enter the Sorbonne, and prepared himself for the priesthood by private reading, especially of the works of St. Thomas. He became in this way one of Vincent de Paul's most efficient helpers in the missions of Paris; preaching, holding meetings for charitable purposes, presiding at religious conferences in connection with the house of St. Lazare, and forming the minds of those who were aspiring to join in the same labours.

He had been engaged in the performance of this obscure work for many years, when suddenly a ray of royal favour shone upon him. In 1637 it chanced that D'Andilly, then in full activity as mediator between Church and Court, heard one of his sermons. His praise of it induced the Duchesse d'Aiguillon, niece of Cardinal de Richelieu, to find out the plebeian preacher and his church. The Princesse de Condé went with her; and all at once Pavillon was a fashionable orator. Those who went merely to gratify an idle curiosity remained to repent and pray; and the all-powerful cardinal, whom his niece kept waiting for his dinner, sent for Pavillon, and offered him the vacant bishopric of Alet. He refused it stoutly; was even unwilling to take the week's grace which the Cardinal pressed upon him. All his friends urged him, at first in vain, to accept the offer. He could not make up his mind to leave the work in the streets of Paris, which was plainly prospering in his hands. At last he was somewhat shaken by the solemn address of his master. "I will rise up against you at the last judgment," said Vincent de Paul, "with the souls of the diocese of Alet, who will perish for want of the instruction which you have refused to give them. It is to those unknown lands, to those frightful mountains, that the true zeal of the house of God ought to lead you." Presently, in deference to the judgment of

others, Pavillon gave way. He had always wished, he said, to be a village curate: God had fulfilled his desire in making him a village bishop.

On account of some disagreement between the Court of France and the Holy See, the bishop designate did not receive his bulls for two years. He spent the time in strict seclusion at St. Lazare, preparing himself by study and prayer for his new office. Twice only he left his retreat; once to preach before the cardinal, and again before the King. The honest severity of his admonitions was variously received at court; some caught the preacher's philanthropic ardour, others sought to lower him in the royal esteem. Louis XIII. had manliness enough of his own to appreciate the Christian manliness of Pavillon, and silenced his detractors by offering him the richer and more attractive see of Auxerre. But Pavillon answered "that he did not belong to himself, but to the Church of Alet; and that from the moment when his Majesty had judged him necessary to the good of that diocese, he was no longer permitted to abandon it." At last the bulls came: he was consecrated at St. Lazare on the festival of the Assumption, 1639; and on the 8th of October of the same year set out for Alet. The journey occupied three weeks. When he reached his destination he was heard to repeat the words of the 132nd Psalm — "This is my rest for ever; here will I dwell, for I have desired it."

The city could not have presented a very cheerful appearance to Parisian eyes. It lies at the foot of the Pyrenees; and the diocese extends to the boundary-line between France and Spain. To reach the town it is necessary to pass through a long defile in the mountain, cut by a torrent, by the side of which a narrow road, which in the seventeenth century was hardly passable for a wheeled carriage, had been made. I quote the following description of it from the account of a pilgrimage made

by Lancelot and Brienne to Alet in 1667. The narrative was sent by Lancelot to La Mère Angélique de St. Jean.*

"The frightful passage of the mountain defile, which is about half a league in length, makes the appearance of this little town somewhat more attractive. The first objects that meet the eye are a new stone bridge, with three fine arcades, and the Bishop's palace, which consists of a large building erected by the old abbots, where there is a garden, together with a very beautiful terrace, which runs all along the river: but this is all that there is beautiful in Alet.

"When we arrived, the gate of the town, which is not finer or larger than that of your monastery, was closed, like that of a private house; and we learned that this was compulsory at all festivals, that no carriage might enter. This was Sunday. We remarked so great a modesty in all the people, who were pretty numerous in the streets, that I think we could have recognised Alet by this alone, if we had happened to have been there without knowing it.

"The town is small, but neat. All the streets are narrow, but all, even to the least, paved and very clean. There is a great covered market in the middle. There are no faux-bourgs, and the circuit of the walls appeared to me to be not much greater than that of your monastery. . . . .

"The mountains which bound it on the north and west are very precipitous. To ascend them is an hour's walk for a robust person; and the road is very steep and straight. They are fully eight or ten times higher than yours; being separated from the palace only by the river, that is, by a short stone's-throw. Those on the east are a little less steep; and those on the south make an opening, which

* Relation d'un Voyage fait à Alet, &c. Mém. de Lancelot, vol. ii.

gives sufficient light to the town, because they ascend gradually, but nevertheless in such a way, that you find nothing but mountains, one piled upon another, as far as the boundaries of Spain." *

The diocese of Alet is one of three—Alet, St. Papoul, and Mirepoix—which were endowed by Pope John XXII. from the revenues of an ancient and celebrated Benedictine abbey at the first-named place. When Pavillon arrived there, there was work enough before him to satisfy the most eager appetite. The town was half in ruins; the cathedral had been burnt by the Huguenots, so that mass was celebrated in the refectory of the Benedictine monastery; and the roof of the Bishop's house let in the rain, which had made its walls green and its floors rotten. The episcopal city contained only six hundred communicants; and the revenues of the see would not furnish forth a moderate English rectory. For more than a hundred years the bishopric of Alet had been held *in commendam* by other prelates, three of whom had been members of one family. In 1622 a M. Polverel had been appointed, who, however, died before receiving his bulls. His brother, a captain of cavalry, applied for and received the benefice, which he kept till his death in 1637. Strange stories were told of him. He did not know Latin from Spanish. He had bought more than one ecclesiastical office about the Court, and passed most of his time in Paris. When he visited his diocese, he did not reside at Alet, but at a country house, where he had a mistress and a family, for whom he provided out of his church patronage. Such was the man whom Nicolas Pavillon succeeded. It is said that the clergy of Alet, as ignorant, dissolute, and worldly as their head, had some presentiment that these pleasant times of license could not last, and found all their fears realised in the

* Lancelot, vol. ii. p. 385.

appointment of a Bishop from St. Lazare. Vows and prayers, they thought, could nevertheless save them from the necessity of decent and sober living; so they made all manner of promises to the Virgin if she would only defend them against the new Bishop; and caused a picture to be painted, in which they were represented, as, clad in their surplices, they preferred this unique request at the feet of their protectress. It would be difficult to illustrate more completely the moral blindness of superstition.

The new Bishop began by forsaking the country house, in which his predecessors had lived, and establishing himself with one or two trustworthy ecclesiastics in the dilapidated palace at Alet. His next step was to visit every parish of his diocese, in order to inform himself of its spiritual state. The survey must have brought to light some strange facts, for his first effort of practical reform had for its object the instruction of the clergy in the simplest truths of religion. He divided the diocese into six districts, in each of which fortnightly meetings of the parish priests were held, presided over by ecclesiastics of approved learning and orthodoxy. The principal mysteries of Christianity, and the fundamental moral and ceremonial duties, were the subjects of discussion at these conferences; while elementary works on Catholic doctrine were at the same time distributed among the clergy. Every month the Bishop drew up a paper of theological questions, which was given to the parish priests, and answered before the next conference. These answers having been examined and approved, formed in due order the subjects of pulpit and catechetical instruction on the Sundays and festivals; and the whole matter was conducted with such regularity, that one truth or duty was simultaneously explained or enforced in every church in the diocese. By these means the zeal and learning of the Bishop were made to compensate for the defects of his subordinates; the teachers themselves

were gradually taught, and a guarantee was obtained for the maintenance of sound doctrine.

M. d'Alet's first assistants in this work were three priests of the Mission, whom Vincent de Paul had sent with him into Languedoc. But before long he discovered that ecclesiastics accustomed to a monastic life were ill fitted to instruct those who had a parochial cure of souls, and so found means to replace them by instruments better suited to his purpose. A connection which he afterwards formed with the Jesuits lasted, in like manner, but a few years: the society has always been noted for its impatience of episcopal control, and did not belie its reputation at Alet. But at the very first the Bishop had established a school and a seminary, which, in due time, began to bear fruit; while the report of the apostolic simplicity and self-denial of his life, as well as of the great things which he was doing in Alet, soon attracted brave and capable soldiers to his standard. The list of those, who gave up the prospect of advancement in other dioceses to labour under the good Bishop among the Pyrenean rocks, is not short. Many laymen, even, retired to Alet, content to occupy the humblest stations in the Church's service; M. de la Roque, a gentleman of birth and fortune, tilled the garden of the seminary; and another, of like station, kept a village school. Some, at least, of the Bishop's clergy imbibed his spirit of self-sacrifice. One, who outlived him, was known to have exchanged his benefice for one of much inferior value, that he might work in the place which most seemed to need his peculiar powers. M. Taffoureau, the next Bishop, was asked one day if he had not found some remains of Jansenism in his diocese. He told, in answer, the story of this good curé, and said, "These are the remains of M. Pavillon's Jansenism, which I jealously preserve, and which are the consolation of my ministry."

Regular episcopal inspections constituted a part of

M. Pavillon's machinery for the oversight of his diocese. Every parish in turn was solemnly visited. The ceremony began with mass; after which the Bishop preached on the gospel of the day, or on that of the preceding Sunday, adapting his remarks to the peculiar circumstances of the place. The sermon was interpreted by the curé into the dialect of the province; after which the state of the parish was minutely reviewed; wants supplied, scandals abated, penances prescribed. This lasted for several days, till the visit ended, as it had begun, in an episcopal exhortation. Besides this, all the curés were summoned, once a year, to Alet, to meet the Bishop in synod. As many as possible were lodged in the palace: the rest were received as guests by citizens of Alet, as it was a rule that no priest should be seen in a house of public entertainment. After high mass had been said, the first day of the synod was occupied by an address from the Bishop on the various duties of parish priests. On the second, complaints were received, difficulties resolved; the irregular were reproved, the feeble encouraged. On the third day a mass was said for the repose of those who had died since the synod of the preceding year; questions relative to the temporalities of the clergy were discussed, and syndics and deputies, who were to have charge of these matters for a year, were appointed. Then the curés were dismissed, with a final exhortation from the Bishop.

At the time of Jubilee, and on some other great occasions, an extraordinary effort was made to glean the ears which had escaped the regular reapers. This was called a mission. The way was prepared by public prayers for the success of the enterprise, throughout the diocese; and every curé was instructed to dispose the minds of his parishioners to receive the missionaries. These were about forty in number; many of them ecclesiastics whom the Bishop had procured from Toulouse or even from Paris;

others connected with his own household or with the seminary. Before proceeding into their several districts, they all took a solemn leave of one another and the Bishop, who, on his part, stationed himself at some central spot, where he was within easy reach of all. The mission usually lasted from a fortnight to three weeks. Regular religious instruction was given to the people during a large part of each day; and every house and family was visited, that private opportunities of exhortation might not pass unused. Quarrels were made up without the assistance of the law; cases of conscience were resolved; evil habits corrected, pressing wants relieved. If we may trust the historian, from whom we have so often quoted, the moral reform at which the missionaries aimed was deep and thorough. "They disabused them of the popular error, that they would be deprived of the benefit of the Jubilee, if they did not receive absolution, and communicate during the fortnight or three weeks that it lasted. They incessantly repeated to them, that the conversion of the heart is the essential thing, and that, as great maladies are not cured in a day, much time and labour are necessary to effect a solid and durable conversion." * And he adds, that after a time a considerable moral amendment, and an edifying discipline, were visible in the diocese.

One of the Bishop's most useful labours was the establishment of an organised system of female education. Like most other successful organisations it began from a small seed, and only gradually grew to embrace the whole diocese. Madame de Bonnecaire, a pious widow of Alet, who was eager to engage in works of charity, was induced by the Bishop to become the mistress of a girls' school in that city. He took a great interest in its success; drew up a code of regulations; and made it an opportunity of addres-

* Vies des Quatre Evêques, vol. i. p. 30.

sing the married and single women of Alet, on the duties peculiar to their sex. For some years this was the only girls' school in the diocese. Then, when the Demoiselle de Montazels, a young lady of good birth, took a fancy to become a nun, and applied to M. d'Alet to recommend a convent to her, he told her that she would better fulfil her Christian duty by teaching the poor girls in the village, of which her father was seigneur. The advice was taken; and Madlle. de Montazels, in spite of much ridicule and opposition, persevered in her work. By and bye she was imitated by others of her age and station; till the Bishop thought it advisable to train his volunteers, and established a kind of female seminary at Alet, under the presidency of Madame de Bonnecaire, to which they might resort for instruction and advice.

The schoolmistresses were divided into two classes. Those of the first class were stationed in the country parishes during nine months of the year, and returned to Alet only in the harvest time, when their scholars were busy in the fields. The second class were a kind of reserve, who were at home in the establishment at Alet, and remained at the disposal of the Bishop for any special emergency. All wore a secular habit; were bound by no vows; and did not, even at Alet, observe any monastic seclusion. But their habits of life were the simplest possible; they received no visits, except from their near relations; and were immediately and personally dependent upon the bishop. Those in the country were not permitted to visit the curés, or to undertake any offices about the Church, which might bring them into communication with them; if it was absolutely necessary to speak to the parish priest, it might be only in the church, and in the presence of some decent matron. In addition to the instruction of the children, the mistresses catechised the women and elder girls on Sundays and festivals; taking care, however, to adhere strictly to the

written instructions of the Bishop. They visited the sick and relieved the wants of the poor, for which purpose the mistress of the seminary supplied them with suitable clothing from a central storehouse.

M. d'Alet was often tempted by the success of his scheme, and the solicitations of his friends, to erect his little body of schoolmistresses into a recognised community. The organisation had spread into the dioceses of Toulouse and of Pamiers; and had he been disposed to imitate most founders of orders, might easily have extended much further. But he said that "communities always degenerate: that one must do the good which lies near at hand, and leave the future to Providence; and that, besides, he did not think it reasonable to charge his successor with young women, who perhaps might not conduce to the true well-being of the diocese, or to oblige virtuous young women to serve an ill-intentioned Bishop." Such self-abnegation is not common in any church, and is especially not of the kind which Roman Catholicism enforces.*

M. Pavillon was one of those who thought that the elevated station and special duties of a Bishop did not absolve him from the minutest personal attention to all his flock. "A Bishop," he was wont to say, "is the sun of his diocese, and ought to give light and warmth to every part of it." Only a few days after his arrival at Alet, he struck the key-note to which all his subsequent conduct was attuned. Walking through the town, he saw a poor man in the agonies of death lying on a wretched heap of straw, and ordered one of his attendants to fetch a bed. The reply was, that they had not had time to procure the necessary furniture, and that the Bishop's own household had hardly beds to lie on. "Then fetch,"

* Conf. Lancelot, vol. ii. p. 408, *et seq.*

rejoined M. d'Alet, "the mattrass of my own bed, for I cannot leave this poor wretch in the state in which I see him." So when his share of his father's property came to him, and his near relations not only entertained, but expressed the hope, that, using the income as he pleased, he would reserve the principal for the benefit of his family, he answered only by sending orders to Paris to dispose of the whole, and applying the proceeds, no less than 40,000 crowns, to the relief of his people in a year of famine. Nor was his charity bounded by his own diocese. When the plague was raging in Toulouse, he sent to the sufferers not only a considerable pecuniary gift, but a large diamond, which he had inherited from his mother, and which had hitherto been used to adorn the Host. His own clothes were in tatters from very age; and he denied himself even necessary books. His Bible was worn out with use; and when some friends remonstrated with him on the state of his breviary, which would hardly hold together, "It is true," he replied; "but a new breviary would be worth at least fourteen or fifteen livres, and in the meantime some poor man might perhaps want a blanket. I had rather that the poor man had the preference, and I still use my old breviary." *

In 1651 the plague broke out in Languedoc. At the first news, the bishop set out for the village where the sickness had begun; devoted all his time and strength to raise the courage, and supply the wants, of the sick; and never left the district till the malady had spent its force. The inhabitants of Alet selfishly complained of his conduct, and expressed their fears that he would bring the infection to them: he silenced them by threatening to take up his permanent abode in the afflicted part of his diocese. Need it be said that his example was as con-

* Lancelot, vol. ii. pp. 400—404.

tagious as the plague, and that many of the curés died manfully at their post? So, on another occasion, sickness, the result of famine, broke out in Capsir, a little district high up in the Pyrenees, on the very frontier of Spain. The ignorant people imagined that it had been caused by sorcery; a wise man of Carcassone was sent for, who, having been promised a reward of a hundred crowns, selected from the inhabitants of five parishes thirty-two women whom he accused of witchcraft. The popular excitement was great; the magistrate of the district shared, or at least did not attempt to stem it; the unhappy women were thrown into prison, and the only question was as to the severity of their punishment. The curés, in despair, applied to the rural dean; and he, in hot haste, sent for the Bishop. It was winter, and the snow fell thickly; and M. d'Alet, when he arrived at the foot of the mountain, was warned by those who were accustomed to the route that it was impossible to proceed. But life was at stake, and he went on. After a time even the guide turned back; but the rural dean knew the country, and, accompanied by him, and by two stout servants, the Bishop still pressed forward. During the two first days, when they were on horseback, they only accomplished four leagues; on the third they were obliged to proceed on foot, and occupied nearly the whole day in struggling through three miles. The Bishop's reward was, that he was not too late. The universal reverence in which he was held disposed the inhabitants to hear him; a few stern words of common sense brought the impostor to his knees, and after a full confession, he was handed over to the civil authorities for punishment.

The Bishop's household was regulated in accordance with his general principles of action. His object was to make it as much as possible like a monastery, where frugality, austerity, obedience to fixed rules, mould the

life from day to day into a pious monotony. His servants were carefully chosen from candidates for ordination; when not otherwise engaged, their time was spent in study; and they were uniformly clad in a half-ecclesiastical garb. He looked upon them all as his children, and took the liveliest interest in the formation of their religious character; so that it was not uncommon for good families of the province to ask admission for their children into the Bishop's household. All rose at five o'clock, and the day was begun and ended with prayer. As in a monastery, communication with the world outside was strictly forbidden, and a book of devotion was read aloud during every meal. Games of chance were not permitted, but on Sundays and festivals, until vespers, the servants were allowed to divert themselves with ball and skittles. The Bishop's own habits were of the simplest. His clothing, the furniture of his house, the ornaments of his church, were poor even to meanness; all that he could spare after the supply of the barest necessities was the inheritance of the poor. He ate but little; and his table was so frugally supplied, that a country cook, whose talents at the best were not very remarkable, left his service in fear of forgetting his business.

It was to be expected that, remote and difficult of access as was Alet, many persons should resort to the good Bishop for religious advice and consolation. In his dealings with all of them is manifest a practical good sense not always consistent with the monastic theory of his church. We have seen how he sent Madlle. de Montazels to her village school, and kept M. de la Roque out of the monastery to till the seminary garden. So when a noble gentleman, M. Montfaucon de la Pejan, who had come to Alet to be under the Bishop's direction, wished, after the death of his wife, to take orders, he gently said, "You will do much better to remain as you are, and live like a Christian;" and

encouraged him to devote himself wholly to the education of his son. So also the Comte de Fénélon and his wife made a retreat at Alet; and the former becoming, like M. de la Pejan, a widower, wished to enter the ecclesiastical state. The Bishop replied, "that he had five little children; that it was his duty to bring them up and provide for them according to their condition; that to dispense with this duty very extraordinary tokens of God's will, which he did not see in him, were needful; and that therefore he could not in conscience abandon a certain duty to follow a movement of zeal and piety which did not accord with it." We shall see, when we come to speak in another place of the Bishop's most illustrious penitents, the Prince and Princesse de Conti, that he would not permit the former to resign the government of Languedoc, and directed his thoughts away from the monastic life to the duty of making reparation for the misery caused by the Princes' War. He dealt differently with those who had already taken ecclesiastical obligations upon themselves. It was to him that the celebrated Abbé de Rancé, the reformer of La Trappe, turned for advice when he first resolved to abandon his gay and luxurious life in Paris, and did not yet know how he should best serve God. He held five rich benefices; how should he compensate to the poor for the wrong which he had done them in applying the revenues of the Church to his own pomp and pleasure? M. d'Alet thought well to deal at first gently with such a penitent, and advised him to sell his patrimony, and to expend the proceeds in charity. From Alet, De Rancé went to Pamiers. He told Caulet that his neighbour was a pitiless man, and had deprived him of all he had, except his Church preferment. "Alas, yes," said M. de Pamiers, "M. d'Alet *is* a strange man. But, M. l'Abbé, how many benefices have you?" "Five," was the reply; "three abbeys and two priories." "As for me," rejoined the

Bishop, "I say that M. d'Alet has treated you too indulgently; if you had come to me I should have reduced you to a single benefice." The one benefice which De Rancé kept was La Trappe.*

At the same time the Bishop was not without his vexations. The secular clergy bore with a bad grace his vigorous measures of reform; the regulars and the mendicants rebelled against his strong assertion of episcopal authority; the gentry of the province resented his plain denunciation of their vices, and the watchfulness of his ecclesiastical police. He had a firm faith in the powers of the Church; excommunication was a weapon which he freely used against his enemies; and his conceptions of what was fitting for a Christian country seemed to have been derived rather from Geneva than from Rome. He put down not only duelling but dancing; and we read in Lancelot's approving page†, of a sound flogging administered to a young gentleman, just leaving the school of Alet, who was convicted of having kissed a pretty girl, as well as danced with her. There is, however, no doubt that in the main the Bishop waged a righteous war against many abuses and iniquities of long standing; and the result was the formation of a league by the gentry and clergy,—each of whom bore a proportion of the expense,—to throw legal obstacles in his way, and to weary out his perseverance by pursuing him from court to court. At last, after a long litigation, the dispute came before the King, who appointed a mixed commission of clergy and laity to examine and decide upon it. The Bishop, whose affidavits were drawn up by Antoine Arnauld, fell back upon the Council of Trent; absolution had not been postponed, or refused in the diocese of Alet, except in cases mentioned in the canons of that council; and ecclesiastical censures had never been

* Conf. Lancelot, vol. ii. p. 390, *et seq.*

† Vol. ii. p. 432.

employed, except when absolutely necessary. After thirty-two sittings the commission pronounced judgment in his favour.

M. Pavillon had at first no Jansenist prejudices. He had come from the school of St. Vincent de Paul, who was hardly more than a half friend of St. Cyran, and distinguished himself by his animosity against his disciples. He had entirely devoted himself, as we have seen, to the internal affairs of his diocese, and was not prepared, by any preeminence of theological learning, to pass judgment on nice questions of grace and predestination. But when, as early as 1643 or 1644, Vincent de Paul endeavoured to excite his old disciple to hostility against the Book of Frequent Communion, he had the honesty to reply that the work related to a practical matter, of which he thought himself qualified to judge; that it had appeared to him orthodox and edifying; and that, "as he could not but respect the doctrine, he left the judgment of the method to God, who alone can judge of the intentions of men." So in 1650 he refused to sign, and prevented his neighbour the Bishop of Pamiers from signing, the letter of the French Bishops to the Pope, complaining of the doctrine contained in the Augustinus. Little by little, we hardly know by what process of conversion, he came to range himself entirely on the side of the Jansenists, who derived an unexpected strength from his already established reputation as "the father and model of the Gallican bishops." I have before related how he was the first of the Four Bishops to oppose the Formulary; the last to yield to any suggestion of compromise. As long as he was inflexible the cause of Port Royal was safe; no peace could be made without him. His distance from the capital, the poverty of his see, the apostolic simplicity of his life, all added weight to his authority. He had never visited Paris since he first left it for Alet; and is recorded once to have

replied to a peremptory mandate of the King that he should appear at court, to answer certain charges which had been preferred against him, that "he was busy with the affairs of his diocese, and could not come." Now, this seclusion corresponded with the wishes of the Jansenist leaders, in keeping him from the temptations of enemies and the bad advice of foolish friends. So he became more and more closely united with Port Royal. The nuns sent him their handiwork in token of their veneration, and received prayers and relics in return. He professed the utmost admiration of their great doctors. "We knew nothing," he said, "before we knew MM. de Port Royal; and we cannot sufficiently praise God for having caused us to know them."*

I have already, in speaking of the Bishop of Pamiers, described the position which M. d'Alet took up in regard to the Régale. When the dispute broke out he was already seventy-six years of age; and he died before it had attained its full virulence. He escaped, therefore, the more active measures of persecution which were taken against his neighbour and ally; though the consciousness that in his old age he was distrusted, and thwarted in all his plans for the good of his diocese by the civil power, and the belief that the bishops of the southern provinces were weakly giving up rights of the Church, which only he and Caulet had the courage to defend, must have been sufficiently bitter. He seemed fated to pass his latter years in controversy, though his opponents often changed sides, and it was now with the Pope, now with the King, that he contended. At the very crisis of the debate on the Formulary, in 1667, he published a Ritual, in which he had digested into a whole the body of theological instructions which he had, during so many years, provided for his

* Lancelot, vol. ii p. 425.

diocese. In this, which was the undoubted right of every bishop, he was assisted by the Jansenist leaders; Arnauld and De Barcos are each mentioned as sharing the responsibility, if not the absolute authorship, of the book. All at once Clement IX., who had already ascended the papal chair, published a bull, *motu proprio*, in which he condemned the Ritual of Alet in the severest terms, excommunicated all its readers, and ordered every Bishop to seize and burn it, wherever found. A few months earlier the bull might have accorded with the public opinion of at least a part of the French Church; but at the moment of its publication every one was longing for peace. It was received therefore in silence, and not officially published, either by the nuncio or the court; while the Bishop, by the advice of his friends, prepared a second edition, in which some slight alterations were made, and which was preceded by the approbation of twenty-eight prelates. The Pope again protested, and the King forbade the edition. But the prohibition must have been well understood to be only a matter of form; the impression was distributed; and M. d'Alet controverted the allegations of the Pope in a long pastoral. The discussion was ended by the death of Clement IX. in 1670.*

The dispute of the Régale was growing every day more bitter, when in 1677, the Bishop, now in his eightieth year, was warned of his approaching death by an attack of paralysis. He partook of the sacraments secretly, in order to avoid an excitement which might hinder him in the performance of his final duties, and then, gathering up all his strength, wrote for the last time to the Pope and the King. To the former, he recommended his unhappy diocese, in which he already saw his life's work undone; and implored Innocent XI. to repair the wrong which Clement IX. had inflicted upon him in the condemnation of his

* Conf. Guettée, vol. x. p. 409; vol. xi. p. 44.

Ritual. To the latter, he firmly and respectfully defended his resistance to the royal orders, and demanded the restoration of three ecclesiastics who had been sent into exile for obeying the commands of their Bishop. Then he lay down to die. A second attack of paralysis finished the work of the first; and though leaving his mind untouched, took away the power of speech and motion. He tried in vain to say a word of farewell to the people of Alet, who pressed in to see him once more. His friends the Bishops of Pamiers and St. Pons attended him during the few days through which he lingered, watching with mournful love the perfect submission with which he waited for the moment of dissolution. It came on the 8th of December. He had passed his eightieth year, and had filled for thirty-nine years the see of Alet. In compliance with his own wishes, the place of his burial was marked by no epitaph.

IV.

MADAME DE LONGUEVILLE.

In speaking of Singlin's success as a confessor, and of the negotiations which ended in the Peace of the Church, I have already mentioned the name of Madame de Longueville. The time has now arrived when it is necessary to narrate the story of her adventurous life, and to attempt to portray her character. But her royal birth, her dazzling beauty, the all-powerful fascination of her manners, the vicissitudes of her private, no less than of her political life, her loves, her sins, her repentance, her misfortunes, as well as the various forms of French society, from the Hôtel de Rambouillet to Port Royal, with which her name is inseparably connected,—all furnish brighter colours and a more living grace to the picture than my art can reproduce. The magic of her charms has not lost all its might even yet; for M. Victor Cousin, who seeks in the investigation of the social life of this period a relaxation from severer labours, traces her career, and defends her memory with so anxious a zeal, as to provoke the smiles of more dispassionate critics. And the student of Port Royal needs to guard his impartiality against the disturbing influences of gratitude to one who succoured the community in the hour of its deepest distress, and procured for it that brief Indian summer of peace which preceded the final winter of its destruction.*

* I must acknowledge a special debt of gratitude for the materials of the following chapter to M. V. Cousin's two volumes on Madame de Longueville,

Anne Geneviève de Bourbon Condé, daughter of Henri, Prince de Condé, was born on the 29th of August, 1619. The royal house of Bourbon, which has won and lost so many European thrones, parted from the main line of the Capetian dynasty in the person of Robert de Clermont, sixth son of Louis IX. The first Bourbon King of France, Henri IV., who ascended the throne after the extinction of the house of Valois by the murder of Henri III. in 1589, was the son of Antoine de Bourbon, Duc de Vendôme, and of Jeanne d'Albret, daughter and heiress of the King of Navarre. From his son, Louis XIII., descend, as is well known, the elder and the younger lines of Bourbon royalty: the elder, now directly represented only by the Comte de Chambord, the titular Henri V.; the younger, or line of Orleans, which survives in the numerous children of King Louis Philippe. But besides these there has existed, till within the memory of the present generation, a third Bourbon family, that of Condé. Antoine de Bourbon, the father of Henri IV., had a younger brother Louis, who became the ancestor of a race which flourished in uninterrupted splendour at the head of the French nobility, till it was extinguished by the judicial murder of the Duc d'Enghien in 1804, and the mysterious death of his aged father, the Prince de Condé, in 1830. The head of this family was honoured with the title of First Prince of the Blood, and was known in French society as, *par excellence*, M. le Prince.

The younger as well as the elder branch of the Bourbons was originally Protestant. Louis, first Prince de Condé,

to those entitled "La Société Française au xvii^e^ Siècle," &c., and to that on Madame de Sablé. For the most part, I have followed his track in the contemporary memoirs; but some of his MS. materials, as well as the bright light with which the vigour and beauty of his style surround the whole subject, are peculiar to himself. I have to regret that his labours on Madame de Longueville are yet incomplete, and that in an important part of her career I have been deprived of his guidance.

uncle of Henri IV., was killed at the battle of Jarnac, in 1568; his son Henri died suddenly, not without suspicion of poison, in 1588, before the conversion to Catholicism of the head of his house. Henri, second of that name, a posthumous child, was educated by his royal cousin and guardian in the old faith. His youth and dependent position precluded him from taking any conspicuous part in the politics of Henri IV.'s reign; and his life, till his marriage in 1609, was wholly uneventful. In that year appeared at court a young lady of extraordinary beauty, Charlotte de Montmorençi, daughter of the Constable of France. Though only in her fifteenth year, her charms, which contemporary portraits still preserve for the admiration of posterity, excited a violent passion in the breast of the King, who engaged in her pursuit with an ardour which left decency and good sense far behind. He broke off a marriage, in which he surmised that the lady's heart might be engaged, and proposed to her parents an alliance with the Prince de Condé. They, nothing loth, accepted the offer of so splendid a match; and the King imagined that he had made the first step towards the attainment of his wishes, in marrying Charlotte de Montmorençi to a man whom she did not love. But Condé was no complaisant husband. He accepted the King's gifts as due to his own position near the throne, and kept jealous watch over his wife. It is no part of our subject to detail the amorous follies of the King: after a time Condé grew weary of the contest, and secretly carried off his wife to Brussels, where he was received, by the representatives of the Pope and of the King of Spain, with royal honours. Henri's rage at the lady's escape was boundless; he would listen to no counsel but that of his own passions; first a private and then a public embassy was sent to demand the surrender of the fugitives; and it is even said that a plan was entertained of kidnapping the princess, and, with or

without her husband, bringing her back to Paris. In the meantime, Condé and his wife were compelled to change their place of refuge again and again, till they finally took shelter in Milan, the governor of which city was supposed to be more resolutely hostile to France than any other of the King of Spain's servants. Hither, too, they were pursued by the extravagant resentment of Henri, who was just about to renew the war with Spain, not least upon this most frivolous of pretexts, when the knife of Ravaillac cut short his career in 1610. His death was the signal for Condé's prompt and almost triumphant return. When he rode into Paris, he was escorted by fifteen hundred gentlemen, among whom were some of the first noblemen of the kingdom.

The King was only nine years old, and a possibility of great power seemed to open itself to the first prince of the blood. Before long we find that he incurred the jealousy of the Queen-Regent, Marie de Mediçis, by the influence which naturally waited on his birth and age, and her anger, by his opposition to the policy of her favourite the Maréchal d'Ancre. She watched her opportunity with true Italian craft, and in 1616 suddenly arrested Condé and threw him into the Bastille, whence, not long afterwards, he was transferred to Vincennes. Here, mindful of his wife's beauty, and of the perils which his honour had already run, he summoned her to be the companion of his captivity; and she, with a sense of conjugal duty, in which love is said to have had but little share, obtained permission to obey the call, upon the hard condition of remaining an inmate of the prison for the whole uncertain period of her husband's confinement. During the three years of her dreary sojourn at Vincennes she gave birth to several children, of whom only one, the heroine of our tale, was born alive, on the 29th of August, 1619. Two months after her birth, Condé was liberated. His eldest son, Louis, known during

his father's lifetime as Duc d'Enghien, and to all future generations as the Great Condé, was born in September, 1621; his only other child, Armand, Prince de Conti, in 1629.*

Of Madlle. de Bourbon's childhood no particulars are recorded. That she was carefully educated is more than probable, for we know that the training to which her elder brother was subjected was both judicious and severe. The vicissitudes of her father's fate ceased with her birth; he left behind him at Vincennes all his plans of political ambition, and, naturally grasping, henceforth turned every energy in the direction of private advantage. When Richelieu appeared upon the scene, Condé was sufficiently keen-witted to see that no royal favourite was so safe an ally as the Cardinal, who governed the weak King by every other agency than that of personal affection. Accordingly, through all the troubles of the reign, the Prince de Condé becomes richer, and, in a subordinate degree, more powerful; till at last he marries his eldest son to a niece of the minister, and buys with the match an army with which the Duc d'Enghien wins the battle of Rocroi. There was, indeed, trouble enough in the family of his wife, as noble and once almost as powerful as his own. In 1627 a near kinsman, Montmorençi-Bouteville, was beheaded in the common place of execution, the Place de Grève, for having fought a duel in open defiance of a royal edict. In 1632 Duc Henri de Montmorençi, the brother of the princess, mounted the scaffold at Toulouse. He had conspired with the king's brother, Gaston, Duke of Orleans, against the authority of Richelieu; and throughout France all who writhed uneasily under that iron yoke pitied and bewailed the fate of so gallant a cavalier, the head of a princely

* Villefore, Vie de Mad. de Longueville, pp. 1—4, 21—28. V. Cousin, La Jeunesse de Mad. de Longueville, pp. 65—67. Tallemant de Réaux, Historiettes, vol. i. p. 175, *et seq.*

house, and still in the bloom of manly strength and beauty. It is easy to imagine the rage, the grief, the mortification which such an event must have aroused at the Hôtel de Condé; especially if, as is not unlikely, the princess resented that selfish policy of her husband which made him the tool of the power which had remorselessly crushed her brother. Madlle. de Bourbon, then thirteen years of age, heard the sad story of her uncle's death with all the agitated sensibility of a romantic girl just treading on the verge of womanhood; and taking a truly Roman Catholic view of the matter, resolved to quit for ever a world where such tragedies were enacted.

In the Fauxbourg St. Jacques, at Paris, stood a convent of Carmelite nuns, which at this period emulated Port Royal in the severity of its discipline and the virtues of its superiors. The ancient order of Carmel had been reformed in Spain, by St. Theresa, about the middle of the sixteenth century; and in 1602, Madame Acarie, a lady whose saintly fame, as great as that of Angélique Arnauld, is darkened by no suspicion of heresy, introduced the regenerated institution into France. The Princesses of the house of Longueville were the first founders of the convent in the Rue St. Jacques; but the Princesse de Condé had also been among its earliest benefactors, and had a room in the house appropriated to her use, whither from time to time she was wont to retire for purposes of religious meditation. An intimate friendship had thus sprung up between the Carmelites and the ladies of the Hôtel de Condé; a friendship honourable on both sides, for the convent had not yet declined from the simplicity of St. Theresa's rule, and many of the sisters were not only pious, but educated and refined women. Such were the friends to whom Madlle. de Bourbon communicated her project of retiring from the world, and with whom she designed to take refuge. In all likelihood they fed the

flame of mystical devotion; they would overlook her youth in consideration of her special spiritual gifts, and their zeal would but be whetted by the fact that she was the only daughter of a royal house, and of a budding beauty which promised to rival even her mother's. The Princess, whose gifts to their community had been marked by a prodigal generosity, would surely not refuse them her child. Madlle. de Bourbon grew every day more fixed in her purpose; and the Duc d'Enghien, who to please his sister had also made costly offerings to their Church, would yield to her caresses and entreaties. But the good nuns reckoned in every way without their host. Their only sure ally was the young lady's confessor; their most resolute opponent, her father. At last the time came when it was thought expedient to loosen the ties which bound her to the convent, and Madlle. de Bourbon, now about sixteen, was ordered, with but three days' notice, to prepare herself for a court ball. She flew in tearful despair to her Carmelite friends, and imploring their advice, promised to obey their direction. Sadly perplexed between the fear of losing their youthful neophyte and offending a powerful benefactress, they decided at last, after holding a solemn council, at which the presiding nuns were supposed to represent the virtues of prudence and penitence, that Madlle. de Bourbon should so far mortify herself as to go to the ball. They clad her in a garment of hair next the skin, and then abandoned her to the milliners and ladies' maids, to do their best or worst. The latter did not spare their pains, and Madlle. de Bourbon's youth, simplicity, and beauty, made her, from the moment of her appearance upon the field of danger, the cynosure of all eyes. The intoxication of one night's success destroyed the edifice which the nuns had painfully built up during many years; and the diamonds of the young débutante cheated her into forgetfulness of the

"cilice" which they covered. She did not break off her friendship with the Carmelites; she corresponded with them, and paid them not unfrequent visits, but she thought no more of entering their order. Only a few brief, dazzling years will pass; and the Duchesse de Longueville may look back with fond and all-hopeless regret at the childish longing for conventional seclusion and peace which once seemed to fill the whole heart of Madlle. de Bourbon.*

The seven years which intervened between our heroine's entrance into the world and her marriage were by far the happiest of her life. She was young, high-spirited, beautiful; an affection, which was almost lover-like in its passionate vicissitudes, united her with her brother; and her rank, as well as the gentle fascination of her manners, brought the whole court to her feet. The memoir writers of this time, and not least those of her own sex, vie with one another in the rapturous terms in which they describe the charms of her person and her mind. La Rochefoucauld, in a passage where he cruelly imputes to her as a fault that very yieldingness of love which made her the instrument of his own ambition, says †: "This Princess had all the advantages of wit and beauty to such a degree, and with such a power of pleasing, that it seemed as if nature had delighted to produce in her person a perfect and finished work." De Retz, who was certainly not given to sounding any one's praises but his own, more than once pays a half-unwilling tribute to Madame de Longueville's grace and wit.‡ Madame de Motteville hardly ever mentions her name without some allusion to her "angel's face." One passage in particular I cannot forbear to quote §: "Her knowledge, her mind, and the opinion

* Villefore, pp. 6—18. V. Cousin, Jeunesse de Mad. de Longueville, p. 74. *et seq.*

† Mémoires, p. 418. ‡ Mémoires, p. 84. § Mémoires, p. 120.

which they had of her discernment, made her admired by all gallants, who were convinced that her esteem was alone sufficient to give them a reputation. If she ruled their minds in this way, the influence of her beauty was not less powerful: for although she had had the small-pox since the Regency, and had lost some little of the perfectness of her complexion, the splendour of her charms attracted all who saw her; and above all, she possessed in a sovereign degree what the Spanish language expresses by the words '*donayre, brio, y bizaria*' (bon air, air galant): she had an admirable figure; and the grace of her person possessed an attraction, the power of which extended even to our sex. It was impossible to see her without loving her, and desiring to please her. Her beauty, nevertheless, consisted more in the hues of her countenance than in the perfection of its features. Her eyes were not large, but beautiful, sweet, and brilliant; and their blue was admirable — it was like the colour of a turquoise. Poets could not compare the white and red of her face even to lilies and roses; and her fair and silvery hair, accompanying so much else that was wonderful, made her much more like an angel—such as the weakness of our nature permits us to imagine them—than a woman." She was naturally indolent both in body and in mind: but the first sat upon her only like a graceful languor, and the second heightened the effect of those flashes of wit and sound judgment to which she sometimes roused herself. She appeared to be indifferent to pleasing, and yet pleased everybody. Few could withstand her entreaties and caresses; while those to whom she turned the nobler side of her nature, repaid her with a life-long love. She, on the other hand, would make any sacrifice to affection; all, even the world, were well lost for love; and love, changing with the desires and passions of the beloved object, assumed in her a thousand shapes. "For

La Rochefoucauld," says Madame de Motteville, "she became ambitious; for him she ceased to love repose; and to be sensible to his affection, became insensible to her own glory." *

But these days of misfortune are not yet come; it is pleasanter to dwell, while we can, on Madlle. de Bourbon's innocent and joyous youth. The Court was dissolute enough, even if we believe only a tithe of the scandalous stories which Tallemant has preserved; but the Princess, who passed through life without a stain upon her name, seems to have watched carefully over her daughter. So she became, at an early age, one of that famous coterie, which assembled at the Hôtel de Rambouillet, and thence gave laws to society and literature. It was a spacious house in the Rue St. Thomas du Louvre, built according to a new plan devised by its fair proprietress, which, placing the stairs at one corner of the building instead of the centre, as was commonly the case, afforded space for a suite of rooms of unwonted size and magnificence. Behind, windows, extending from the ceiling to the floor, looked out upon spacious gardens, which stretched as far as the Carousel and the Tuileries. Here, in a well-known room, hung with blue velvet lighted up by ornaments of silver and gold, Madame de Rambouillet and her daughter were wont to receive the learning, the wit, the genius, the beauty of Paris. The history of their coterie has furnished matter for more than one volume: a page or two is all that we can give to it here.

Catherine de Vivonne was the only child of the Marquis de Pisani, once ambassador at the Papal See, by a noble Roman lady, Julia Savelli. When only twelve years old she was married to Charles d'Angennes, Marquis de Rambouillet, a nobleman who held a high and honourable

* Mémoires, p. 120.

place both in the warfare and the diplomacy of his time. The union was a happy one ; scandal itself, in the shape of Tallemant des Réaux, interrupts its uniformity of detraction to sing the praises of Madame de Rambouillet ; and her husband was a man of noble character, who took an affectionate pride in her accomplishments and social consideration. Their family consisted of two sons and five daughters. Of the former one died at an early age ; the other, who inherited through his mother the title of Marquis de Pisani, followed, though deformed, the profession of arms, was the friend and companion of Condé, and was killed by his side at the battle of Nordlingen in 1645. Three of the daughters were condemned to the monastic life ; one, Julie d'Angennes, was long the centre of the distinguished society which assembled in her mother's house ; another, Angélique, became the first wife of that M. de Grignan, who afterwards married Madame de Sévigné's daughter, and has obtained a vicarious immortality in his mother-in-law's letters.

About the year 1618, when Madame de Rambouillet was thirty years of age, her house first acquired its reputation. She had the good taste to grow weary of the noisy crowds which thronged the assemblies of the Louvre, and the boldness to confess her weariness. Suddenly she announced, and ever after kept her resolution, to go no more to court, but to assemble round her, in her own salons, a more select and pleasant society. The splendour of her house, the good taste of its furniture, the ease with which wits and nobles met on equal terms under the presidency of a clever and kind-hearted hostess, the delightful manners of the whole family and especially of "the divine Julie," soon attracted to the Hôtel de Rambouillet a circle of congenial guests. The tone of the house was that of a gallant but somewhat formal courtesy, which sat more naturally upon a generation which had not yet forgotten the

traditions of chivalry than is now easy for us to understand. Every member of the circle was known by a romantic name: Arthenice, an anagram of Catherine, was the pseudonym of Madame de Rambouillet, a name which Flechier did not think it inappropriate to apply to her when preaching her funeral sermon. There was much love-making, but not a single intrigue; the authority of the house was promptly used against any unbecoming freedom of word or action. Voiture once ventured to kiss the hand of Julie d'Angennes, but met with such a rebuff as effectually prevented the repetition of the offence; while Tallemant relates with wonder that Madame de Rambouillet did not suffer to be spoken in her presence words which then might be in common use, but which now no decent woman would choose to hear. Politics were as jealously excluded from the house as love; Richelieu, with whom M. de Rambouillet stood well, once sought to turn the coterie into an engine of his policy; but the lady asked his emissary whether he took her to be fit material for a spy, and routed him with disgrace. Madame de Rambouillet's ostensible was also her real object; she wished to collect about her the wittiest and most refined men and women of her time. The subjects and the manner of their conversation were naturally determined by their literary predilections; they passed judgment on the productions of the day, and in so doing unconsciously established canons of taste. By and bye a time came when the only way to fame was through the approval of the Hôtel de Rambouillet; and then again a time when the taste of the coterie became more and more false and artificial, and the public, despising its verdicts, fell back upon its own judgment.

The Hôtel de Rambouillet was at the height of its fame during the thirty years between 1620 and 1650. Many circumstances conspired to hasten its decline before the

end of that period. The death of the Marquis de Pisani in 1645, the disruption of Parisian society occasioned by the wars of the Fronde, in 1648 and the following years, might hardly have had this effect, had it not been for the marriage of Julie d'Angennes. Though the constant theme of poetic adoration, she was unquestionably not beautiful; and the complying sweetness of her manners was, to a great extent, the cause of her wide-spread popularity. For her M. de Montausier, a gentleman of good birth and large hopes, sighed with romantic perseverance for thirteen years. She accepted his devotion after the manner of the coterie, and suffered her name to be united with his in the poetic compliments which made a large part of its literature; but never thought of love, and never spoke of marriage. Her lover persisted: to win the good word of Anne of Austria, suffered himself to be converted from Protestantism to Mother Church; enlisted on his side, by various means, father, mother, brother, sisters, friends, and at last won his bride when she had reached the mature age of thirty-eight. The courtship is chiefly memorable on account of a costly and elegant piece of gallantry, which yet exists to tell its tale of old-world love, and coldness, and perseverance. This is "La Guirlande de Julie," a folio volume, splendidly bound, which M. de Montausier laid at her feet as the rarest gift his affection could devise. The frontispiece consisted of a garland of twenty-nine different flowers, painted on vellum by Robert, the first flower-painter of the day. Each of the twenty-nine leaves that followed exhibited a single flower by the same hand, with an appropriate madrigal in praise of Madlle. d'Angennes, inscribed by Jarry, a well-known caligrapher. Some of the madrigals were by Montausier himself; the rest were the work of the poets who frequented the Hôtel de Rambouillet. Even this elaborate and beautiful offering failed to soften the lady's obduracy,

for her marriage did not take place till three or four years after the date of the gift. Then, in all probability, she was tempted to end her lover's suspense by the prospect of a high place at court, which he would be able to obtain for his wife. Madame de Montausier became first lady of honour to Louis XIV.'s queen, Maria Theresa; lived to see her husband Duke and Peer of France; and sullied the fair fame of Julie d'Angennes, and of the society which had once worshipped her, by her base connivance at the passion of the King for Madlle. de la Vallière.

The services which the Hôtel de Rambouillet rendered to the French language and literature were neither few nor slight. Its greatest influence coincides with the period at which the language was making its singularly rapid transition from an archaic inelegance to perfect strength and beauty. All the resources of the French tongue are displayed in the "Provincial Letters"; and yet only sixty years intervene between them and the Essays of Montaigne, not the least part of whose charm it is that they are redolent, in phrase and tone, of the sixteenth century. One might have been written yesterday; the other is of Spenser's and Shakspeare's age. Perhaps one reason why this change was so rapidly accomplished lies in the social union between the wits and the great nobles of the kingdom, of which the Hôtel de Rambouillet was partly the result and partly the cause. With the exception of Descartes, I can call to mind no great author of the seventeenth century who was not in close connection with the court, or the society which depended on it. And Madame de Rambouillet's refining and purifying influence was exerted chiefly at the very period of transition. Malherbe, who is often called the Father of French poetry, belongs to the first twenty years of the century; Balzac, in like manner, known as the earliest writer of French prose, was himself a frequent guest at her house. After a time, her society

suffered the usual fate of coteries; refinement degenerated into affectation, chivalrous feeling into empty sentiment, purity of expression into an arbitrary choice of words, the judgment of natural good sense into the application of artificial canons of taste. Perhaps these phrases are too severe to describe the decadence of the Hôtel de Rambouillet; but they are certainly applicable to the coteries which arose upon its decay, and affected to perpetuate its traditions. The lash which Molière wielded in "Les Précieuses Ridicules," and "Les Femmes Savantes," was well deserved, but not by the friends of Madame de Rambouillet. Whatever the errors and absurdities to which she lent her sanction, she must be allowed the glory of having brought together princes and authors upon equal terms; of having helped, before the establishment of the Academy, to make the French language an exact and refined vehicle of thought; of having defended the genius of Corneille against the envy and dislike of Richelieu; and, not least, of having, to some extent, impressed upon the literature of her time her own womanly purity and dignity.

To this celebrated society Madlle. de Bourbon was very early introduced. At the time when Henri IV., then childless, had designed the Prince de Condé to inherit his crown, he had charged the Marquis de Pisani, Madame de Rambouillet's father, with his education; a circumstance which no doubt created a bond between the two families. Madlle. de Bourbon soon became a leading spirit in the circle, and by her birth and beauty divided the empire with the mental charms of Julie d'Angennes. After a lapse of some years we find her sole arbitress of poetic taste, daring to reverse the judgment of all Paris, and able triumphantly to maintain her own. When Voiture and Benserade wrote, in rivalry, two sonnets, which appear to posterity equally worthless, a mighty controversy arose as to their respective merits; the Academy was divided into

hostile camps, and court and town waged internecine war. The general voice was in favour of Benserade, but Madame de Longueville, faithful to the Hôtel de Rambouillet, took up the cause of Voiture, and by her single efforts turned the fortune of the fight. Now, a girl, who hardly dare raise her voice in the presence of such wits, she notes how the same Voiture, forgetting that he is a vintner's son, in his renown as poet and *bel esprit*, demonstrates his equality with dukes and princes by familiarities which sometimes border on the ungraceful. Corneille is there, secure in the applause of his friends against the enmity of Richelieu and the carping criticisms of the Academy. Richelieu himself sometimes condescends to spare an hour from affairs of state, and to play the man of letters; and Condé hastens hence to win his maiden battle of Rocroi, and hither again to sun his laurels in his sister's, and other still more beloved eyes. Balzac, respectable author of much dull morality and innumerable letters, but in his own day first of serious authors; Chapelain, who thinks he is a poet, and hereafter indites a huge "Pucelle" which no man can read; Conrart, first secretary of the Academy, a man who has the talent of keeping loose papers, and whose portfolios have but now yielded up unexpected treasures; Madlle. de Scudery and her brother, authors of those ponderous romances "The Grand Cyrus," and "Clélie," which were once the delight of all gentle maidens,—are constant visitors. Other names bring us nearer to Port Royal: Arnauld de Corbeville, soldier, wit, and poet, cousin of Angélique and Antoine; Madame de Sablé, whose singular connection with the community will need a special word of description; Godeau, afterwards Bishop of Vence, and a strenuous opponent of the Formulary, now, in his gay days, known, on account of his small stature, as the Princess Julia's dwarf,—were all of the inner circle; and the "bon homme D'Andilly" sometimes found

his way hither, as wherever there were bright eyes and lively conversation. I might almost indefinitely lengthen the list, but to what purpose? To all who have not some special interest in the literature and the period, it is only to enumerate "fortemque Gyan, fortemque Cloanthum." Corneille was the only poet who did not contribute to "La Guirlande de Julie," and Corneille is the only one whose name will never pass away.*

M. Victor Cousin, who delights to dwell upon these bright and innocent years of his heroine's life, follows her, in the pleasant summer time, to the stately chateaux of the Condés and the Montmorençis, and reproduces in vivid colours the gayer and more youthful society of which she was the undisputed queen. Voiture and Sarrazin, and a host of smaller poetasters, who in Paris were bound by every motive of loyalty to sing the praises of Julie d'Angennes, willingly celebrated at Chantilly the grace and beauty of Madlle. de Bourbon. Brother and sister were alike attended by a choir of youths and maidens; he, by a band of brave and joyous companions, heirs, like himself, to wide domains and noble names, and eager to risk their lives on every field of battle to which Condé and the love of adventure might lead them; she, by a bevy of high-born damsels, beautiful and *debonnair*, willing to receive all knightly homage, and to reward by their smiles deeds of high emprize. We do not hear that Madlle. de Bourbon lost her heart in this perilous

* Villefore, p. 29. Tallemant, vol. iii. pp. 204—258. Cousin, Jeunesse de Mad. de Longueville, chap. ii. For the Hôtel de Rambouillet, I must refer generally to M. Cousin's volumes, "La Société Française au xvii^e^ Siècle, d'après le Grand Cyrus de Mademoiselle de Scudery." This well-known romance is believed to pourtray the Society of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, and to describe its principal members under fictitious names. Thus Cyrus himself is Condé, and Mandane, Madame de Longueville. In the discovery and illustration of these analogies, M. Cousin has accumulated the results of much research, of which I have gladly availed myself.

commerce; the romance of her little court all centres in the passionate love of Condé for Madlle. du Vigean. The story would be worth telling had we time to digress into every flowery way which leads aside from the main path of our narrative. Condé, still almost a boy, and undistinguished except as heir to his father's honours, saw and loved one of his sister's nearest friends, a lady of noble birth, heiress to great wealth, and one whom, if not his equal, he might well have married without derogation to his rank. He did not love in vain; Madlle. du Vigean returned his passion. But his father's sordid and servile policy would not suffer such a marriage, and Condé was perforce betrothed to Madlle. de Brézé, a niece of Richelieu, who brought not only a dowry of present favour, but the promise of a share in the Cardinal's vast inheritance. In vain Condé protested, remonstrated, delayed; the marriage took place almost in the bridegroom's despite. Still, through four years, he pursued Madlle. du Vigean with unremitting ardour; hoping, though none can tell on what canonical grounds, to procure a divorce from the poor, patient wife, who had no fault but that her husband loved another. In 1642 the death of the Cardinal, in 1643, that of the King, raised his hopes to their highest pitch; what could the Queen-Regent refuse to the conqueror of Rocroi? But she, too, was not without her reasons for sympathy with a neglected wife, and steadfastly repulsed all Condé's solicitations. At last, after a long illness, which succeeded the campaign of 1645, the lover ceased to strive if not to love. Madlle. du Vigean, still faithful, had refused many advantageous offers of marriage; she would not be Condé's mistress, she could not be his wife. So she turned to the refuge which always waits for Catholic despair, and fled, an innocent La Vallière, to the Carmelite convent of the Rue St. Jacques. There, Sœur Marthe de Jésus might at

least see the Madame de Longueville, who, in the world had been the friend of Madlle. du Vigean, and watch if the name of Condé fell perchance from her lips. She lived till 1665; long enough to see her youthful companion seek the same refuge from sin as she herself had found from sorrow.

Love was allowed to influence the choice of a husband for Madlle. de Bourbon as little as that of a wife for her brother. When she was about nineteen, a project was formed of marrying her to the Prince de Joinville, a scion of the house of Guise. But the plan of thus uniting in a family compact the houses of Condé, of Montmorençi, and of Lorraine, fell to the ground on the death of the young bridegroom; and for some years more Madlle. de Bourbon remained unmarried. Then her father, despairing of finding a nobleman, near her own age, of sufficient rank and power to deserve her hand, resolved to marry her to the Duc de Longueville, who was indisputably, next to himself, the greatest Seigneur of the kingdom. He too was, after a fashion, of royal blood; being descended from Dunois, the bastard of Orleans, who played so distinguished a part in the expulsion of the English from France. Besides his territorial possessions within the realm, he was lord of Neufchâtel; and his first wife had been a lady of royal birth. But he was already forty-seven, while his intended bride was only twenty-three; he had a daughter who had arrived at womanhood: even had he been younger he would hardly have touched the heart of Madlle. de Bourbon; while his indifference to her, and his devotion to the Duchesse de Montbazon, were alike notorious. But what mattered all this to those who concluded the matrimonial bargain? He needed an heir to his honours, and the Prince de Condé a husband for his daughter, noble and splendid enough to mate with a Bourbon. So the bargain was made; and on the 2nd of

June, 1642, Anne Geneviève de Bourbon became Madame de Longueville. She met her fate with all the courage of her race; and those who shared in the magnificent festivals with which her marriage was celebrated, remarked only her gay demeanour and triumphant beauty. But there were some who knew that her apparent gaiety covered a heavy heart.*

Such a marriage could hardly end in any result but one. I have already said that the key to the whole of Madame de Longueville's character lies in her heart; to a husband whom she loved, she would have been as clay in the hands of the potter; with one to whom she was indifferent, and who showed as little care to gain her esteem as her affection, she but waited till the Fairy Prince came by, whose destiny it was to wake her sleeping passion into life. In the scandal of an age which interprets every exchange of courtesy into an acknowledgment of favoured love, and delights to translate even undeniable profligacy into iniquity of a deeper dye, Madame de Longueville has not escaped the imputation of more sins than one. That she was unfaithful to her marriage vow it must be owned; by and bye the story of her provocation, her sin, and her repentance shall be told; but I can find no evidence to warrant the belief that she was a profligate woman, as Madame de Montbazon, her rival in her husband's affections, was profligate. She gave her heart once, and gave herself with it. But the delirium of self-will was very brief, and the self-reproach lasted for a life-time.

An attack of small-pox, soon after her marriage, was just sufficiently alarming to awaken the fears of Madame de Longueville's friends, and to call forth a chorus of congratulation when her beauty emerged, hardly impaired, from the peril. Her husband had already left her to take

* Villefore, p. 57. Cousin, Jeunesse de Mad. de Longueville, p. 148, *et seq.* pp. 196, 197.

the command of a French army in Italy, and her life flowed on in much the same current as before. The pride of the Princesse de Condé had extorted from the Queen-Regent a decree, which provided, that Madlle. de Bourbon should not lose by her marriage rank and precedence as a princess of the blood: the young bride had all her old friends about her, was still the chief ornament of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, and reassembled in her own house the delightful society of Chantilly. Her husband, who had his own occupations, interests, loves, hardly consulted her feelings or her wishes, except in leaving her a complete and perilous liberty of action. And before she had been many months a wife, her name was tossed about by unfriendly voices of rumour, and an ugly stain of blood darkened across her path.

The Duchesse de Montbazon, a black-browed, Amazonian beauty, of whom the chronicles of the time speak with an ominous uniformity of scandal, had been the avowed mistress of the Duc de Longueville, and had a thousand reasons for jealousy of his young and brilliant wife. One was in the first blossom of her beauty, the other's charms were waning; the name of one was unsullied, that of the other could hardly receive a new or deeper stain; more than one admirer had left Madame de Montbazon to try their fortune with her rival; and, worse than all, it was said that the Princesse de Condé had exacted from her son-in-law a promise that he would break off all connection with a lady who did not scruple openly to brave and defy his wife. Soon arrived a tempting opportunity for revenge. A female attendant upon Madame de Montbazon picked up in a crowded salon two anonymous letters, written in a woman's hand, and evidently addressed to a happy lover. It was afterwards discovered that they had been written by Madame de Feuquerolles to the Marquis de Maulevrier, who had been clumsy enough to lose them in a public

place. But it did not suit Madame de Montbazon's purpose to inquire into the real authorship. Among the lovers who, in the gallant fashion of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, waited upon Madame de Longueville's smiles, was Maurice, Comte de Coligni. He was a young nobleman of great name and hopes; the intimate friend and companion-in-arms of Condé, who, it is said, encouraged his romantic devotion to his sister. So the rumour was industriously spread that the letters which Madame de Montbazon possessed, and which she showed to a few chosen friends, were written by Madame de Longueville to Maurice de Coligni; and men began to draw the inference which she wished, that M. de Longueville's wife was little more prudent in her conduct than his mistress. The scandal soon made its way to those whom it was chiefly designed to wound; but Madame de Longueville was too indifferent to her husband to be very angry with her rival, too confident of her own innocence to take any extraordinary pains to prove it, and at all times unable to vanquish her natural indolence, unless the effort was demanded by affection. On the other hand, the Princesse de Condé was furious. She had passed through life without the imputation of unfaithfulness to a husband who did not engage her affections, and was indignant that it should be fixed upon her daughter. She felt far more than Madame de Longueville the injury and slight of her son-in-law's half-contemptuous coldness to his young and beautiful wife. But besides this, reasons of state mingled in the quarrel. Mazarin, helped by all the influence of the Condés, was making his gradual but sure way to Richelieu's still unoccupied seat. His rival, the Duc de Beaufort, was one of Madame de Montbazon's numerous lovers, and derived his chief strength from the personal friendship between Madame de Chevreuse, Madame de Montbazon's stepdaughter, and the Queen. If the mistress had found the

opportunity for a blow tempting, the mother-in-law found it doubly tempting for reprisal. So she represented to the Queen the insult which the royal house had received in the person of her daughter; the Duc d'Enghien hastened from the campaign of Rocroi to espouse his sister's cause: and a new and personal bitterness distinguished the parties into which the court was divided.

The Queen decided at last that Madame de Montbazon should make a public apology to the Princesse de Condé and her daughter. Says Madame de Motteville*, "What she was to say to this effect, and the words in which she was to be answered, were written in the little cabinet of the Louvre, upon the Cardinal's tablets, who apparently laboured to settle all these quarrels to the contentment of both parties. I was there the evening that all these important matters were gone into, and I remember how I wondered within myself at the follies and idle occupations of this world. The Queen was in her great cabinet, and with her Madame la Princesse, who, all agitated and terrible, made this affair a matter of high treason. Madame de Chevreuse, engaged by a thousand reasons in her mother-in-law's quarrel, was with Cardinal Mazarin, composing the harangue which she was to make. About every word there was an hour's conference. The Cardinal, playing the busybody, went from one side to the other to accommodate their difference, as if this peace had been necessary to the happiness of France, and to his own in particular; I never saw, in my opinion, so complete a farce." Presently the whole important negotiation came to an end. The letters had been already given up, and after having been attested by witnesses of the highest character as not in Madame de Longueville's hand, had been burned in the Queen's presence. Now it was agreed

* Mémoires, p. 58.

that Madame de Montbazon should go to the Hôtel de Condé, and there pronounce the apology which had been written for her. So on the appointed day she read it from a paper attached to her fan; the Princess replied in the stipulated terms; both ladies threw into the words of reconciliation as much scorn and defiance as they could, and it was soon understood that the quarrel was as bitter as before.

Not long afterwards, a dispute on a point of etiquette, in which Madame de Chevreuse was so unlucky as to offend the Queen's Spanish pride, ended in a royal letter commanding Madame de Montbazon to retire to her country house. So bold a measure irritated beyond bounds the Duc de Beaufort and his party, who allowed themselves to be hurried into plots against Mazarin, which were too hastily and angrily to be successfully laid. The Cardinal, on the other side, saw that the time was come to strike a decisive blow for power; Beaufort was arrested and sent to Vincennes, and his accomplices, male and female, removed from Paris. Unfortunately the matter did not end here. The Duc d'Enghien made no secret of his resentment, and permitted, if he did not encourage, his friend Coligni to mingle in the fray. Public rumour was prompt to say that Coligni's interference itself proved that he was a favoured lover; a more reasonable as well as more charitable supposition is, that he thus sought to win the regards of her whose cause he undertook. The Duc de Beaufort, who had chiefly signalised himself as Madame de Montbazon's partisan, was in prison; so Coligni boldly challenged, in face of royal edicts against duelling, which had been enforced with impartial severity, another great nobleman, the Duc de Guise. The challenge was given and accepted on the 12th of December. At three o'clock on the afternoon of the same day the combatants met in the Place Royale, which, though surrounded by the

hôtels of many of the chief nobility, was a favourite place for duels. Each was attended by a second, who, according to the barbarous fashion of the day, fought in the quarrel of their principals. More than one circumstance seems to throw a tragic gloom over the struggle; Coligni was weak from the effects of a long illness, and Guise arrogant with more than even the ordinary pride of his house. They could not but remember the Wars of the League, in which the names of their ancestors had been the rallying cry on opposite sides. "We are going to decide," said Guise, "the ancient quarrels of our houses, and it will be seen what a difference there ought to be made between the blood of Guise and the blood of Coligni." At the very beginning of the fight Coligni fell, and his adversary, striding across him, contemptuously exclaimed, "I do not wish to kill you, but to treat you as you deserve for having challenged a prince of my birth who had given you no offence;" and so struck him with the flat of his sword. Stung with the indignity, Coligni regained his weapon with a great effort, and recommenced the combat. But either from weakness or inferiority of skill he was unable to prolong it, and in a few minutes was compelled, by a severe wound in the arm, to acknowledge himself worsted. Guise was slightly hurt in the shoulder, and both of the seconds were sorely wounded.

A duel between such combatants, and in such a quarrel, could not fail to occupy all men's minds, even at a time of political crisis. Public opinion declared itself against Coligni, who was deemed to have called out his opponent without sufficient provocation. The Queen was greatly incensed at the violation of the edict; even the Prince and Princesse de Condé, who had upheld their daughter's cause so hotly, found it expedient to disavow her unlucky champion. One friend, the Duc d'Enghien, did not forsake him; but took him into his house, attended to his wounds,

and announced his intention of supporting him with all his influence against any criminal proceedings which the house of Lorraine might institute. His friendship was not put to this last test, for in May 1644, Coligni died of his wound. Meanwhile, scandal had been busy with the fair fame of Madame de Longueville. She had herself, it was said, urged Coligni to avenge her on the Duc de Guise. She had watched the duel from a window of a house in the Place Royale, belonging to the Duchesse de Rohan. Her name was united with Coligni's in the street songs of Paris.* But all the trustworthy evidence goes to prove that Madame de Longueville was innocent of more than the indiscretion of having lent a willing ear to Coligni's gallantry. He was an old friend and playmate, her brother's companion-in-arms, one of the happy little society which had met at Chantilly, and her own devoted cavalier after the fashion of the Hôtel de Rambouillet. Pity that the rude-tongued populace failed to distinguish between gallants of the ordinary type and those who fluttered and sighed in vain round fair and frigid *précieuses!* †

But what part has M. de Longueville played in this imbroglio? None, except to strive in a feeble and ineffectual way to prevail with the Princesse de Condé that

* One of them, which Madame de Motteville has preserved, runs thus:

"Essuyez vos beaux yeux,
Madame de Longueville,
Essuyez vos beaux yeux,
Coligni se porte mieux.
S'il a demandé la vie,
Ne l'en blâmez nullement;
Car c'est pour être votre amant
Qu'il veut vivre éternellement."

† Villefore, p. 45, *et seq.* Cousin, Jeunesse de Mad. de Longueville, p. 225, *et seq.* Mad. de Motteville, Mémoires, p. 56, *et seq.*, p. 64. Mémoires de Mademoiselle, p. 20. Michelet, Richelieu et La Fronde, chap. xviii.

the quarrel might be hushed up. Public decency would not allow him to take the side of Madame de Montbazon, and some old love, or present fear of that audacious lady, prevented him from espousing the cause of his wife. So, when in 1645 he was appointed to preside over the negotiations at Munster, which had hitherto failed to put an end to the Thirty Years' War, Madame de Longueville remained in Paris with no sign of discontent. Already, in 1644, she had given birth to a daughter, who lived but a few months, and was now pregnant of the son in whom the house of Longueville came to an inglorious end. Why should she leave Paris, where she reigned queen of all the hearts over which she cared to assert her royalty, to follow a husband, whom she did not love, to a barbarous country, where uncouth plenipotentiaries wrangled in Latin for the rights and dignities of their petty northern princes? She left the settlement of their broils to M. de Longueville, while she fought and won a battle for precedence with Mademoiselle, the maiden niece of Henri IV. The combat took place at Nôtre Dame, at a funeral service for the Queen of Spain, and Mademoiselle confessed her defeat by public tears: what battle could be so well worth the winning? * Day by day the Condés became more powerful; nothing could be refused to the young general who every year won a battle which cheated France into applause of Mazarin's policy; the sister's beauty and the brother's glory each added a fresh brilliance to the other. But the little cloud which was to obscure all this sunshine was already creeping up the sky: Madame de Longueville had seen the Prince de Marsillac, and her brother, with or without reason, feared for the honour of his house. He remonstrated in vain: perhaps his remonstrance was too harsh to come with right from any but a husband's lips,

* Mémoires de Mad. de Motteville, p. 84.

perhaps his sister's heart had already begun to play the traitor to her happiness. At last they quarrelled; and D'Enghien wrote to his brother-in-law to advise him to withdraw his wife from Paris. The answer was a summons to Madame de Longueville to join the Congress at Munster, which she unwillingly obeyed. In June 1646, therefore, she set out from Paris, accompanied by her stepdaughter, Madlle. de Longueville, and a numerous escort.

The Duke had gone to Munster less as an able diplomatist than as a great nobleman, whose presence might compose the differences between the two clever negotiators who already represented the policy of Mazarin. So he issued orders, that everywhere along the route his wife should be received with the honours due to a princess of the blood, whose husband stood for the nonce in the place of royalty itself. As her boat glided up the sluggish current of the Meuse, an escort, sometimes of cavalry, sometimes of infantry, kept the bank of the river, and accompanied her course with salvos of musketry, and all military tokens of joyful honour. The governors of the towns in her route met her before the gates, and offered the keys of their strongholds, as to a sovereign princess; the chapter of Liège sent a deputation to welcome her; and the Spanish governor of Namur accompanied her to her lodging in the city with a guard of four thousand men. Maestricht, Ruremonde, Wenlo, Gueldres, vied with one another in the magnificence of their preparations for her reception; and Turenne reviewed an army in her honour on the banks of the Rhine. At last, with M. de Longueville, who had come as far as the frontiers of the Spanish states to meet her, she made a triumphant entry into Munster; and soon, as at Paris, reigned absolutely over the little court which her beauty and amiability did not fail to draw round her.

But Munster was very dull even when it donned its

holiday dress; and while the daily work of negotiation was going on, must have had, to Madame de Longueville, somewhat of the air of a prison. At no period of their married life does there seem to have been any affection between her and her husband; while her relations with her stepdaughter were as little pleasant as such relations proverbially are. She was, indeed, queen of the Congress — but how narrow and rude the kingdom! How wide an interval between the too artful, too delightful flatteries of Marsillac, and the uncouth German gallantry of the ambassador from Brandenburg or Brunswick! In her weariness, she made a journey into Holland, where she visited the unhappy Queen of Bohemia, who, widowed and an exile, saw in the troubles of England the knell of all her own hopes in Germany. Then, on her return to Munster, she lingered out the winter of 1646-7; till at last her pregnancy furnished a pretext for the much-desired return to Paris. However her husband might wish to retain her near himself, he could hardly resist such a plea; and in May 1647, she gladly hastened to Chantilly. The future never showed so bright to her, as she fled from her enforced stay at Munster to the freedom and gaiety of Paris; and never, as she learned too soon, truly lowered so dark.

Her father had died in December 1646, and not only his vast wealth, but the great offices of state which he had held, were divided between his two sons, the Duc d'Enghien, now Prince de Condé, and Armand, Prince de Conti. The latter, fresh from college, where he had studied with more diligence and success than are commonly the lot of princes, had met Madame de Longueville on her homeward journey, and, like Condé before him, had at once owned her sway. He was ten years her junior, and being mean and somewhat deformed in stature, was designed to enter the church. Already loaded with ecclesiastical wealth, he threw himself, while waiting for the cardinal's hat, which the influence of

France was to procure from Rome, into the life of the society which moved about his sister. Condé added every year to his own glory, and to the stability of Mazarin's power; in 1643 he won the battle of Rocroi, in 1644 that of Friburg, in 1645 that of Nordlingen; in 1648 he will bring the negotiations at Munster to a sudden conclusion by the victory of Lens. In that very Congress of Munster, the most important which Europe had seen for many years, the principal part, in dignity at least, is allotted to the brother-in-law of the Condés. Of our heroine let Madame de Motteville speak*: "This princess, who reigned in her family even when absent, and whose approbation every one longed for as a sovereign good, when she returned to Paris, in May 1647, did not fail to appear with more *éclat* than when she left it. As the friendship, which M. le Prince her brother had for her, gave countenance to her actions and her manners, the greatness of her beauty, as well as that of her genius, so increased the power of the family cabal, that she had not been long at the court before she had almost wholly taken possession of it. She became the object of every desire; her *ruelle* was the centre of all intrigues; and those whom she liked became at once the minions of fortune. Her courtiers were feared by the minister; and in a little while we shall see her the cause of all our revolutions, and the disturbances which seemed likely to prove the ruin of France." †

But notwithstanding the quick and subtle intellect which all her contemporaries agree in ascribing to Madame de Longueville, she needed an impulse from without to make her the restless intriguer which Madame de Motteville describes. For herself, she was satisfied with social triumphs; princes and poets vied with one another for her

* Mémoires, p. 119. † Villefore, p. 60. *et seq.*

smiles; her rank by birth and marriage left her nothing to desire, and she stood, with all the Condés, in the full sunshine of royal favour. It is easy to see how, under some circumstances, family affection might have made her a political adventurer; for a wayward, changeful, and yet passionate attachment united her with both her brothers. But the impulse came from a less lawful love; a selfish schemer, who hid his selfishness under the mask of a chivalrous gallantry, had seen how, if her heart could but be won, she might become the all-efficient instrument of his own purposes, and so set himself to win her heart. Nor is this the theory of a biographer, anxious to secure for a frail heroine at least the reader's sympathy, by representing her to have thrown away her affection on one who was too poor in nobleness to make any return. La Rochefoucauld coolly tells the story of his own baseness*:—

"So much labour in vain, and so many vexations at last inspired into me other thoughts, and made me seek a perilous way of showing my resentment against the Queen and Cardinal Mazarin. The beauty of Madame de Longueville, her mind, and all the charms of her person, attached to her everybody who could hope to be acceptable to her. Many men and women of quality tried to please her; and besides the agreeableness of this court, Madame de Longueville was then so united with all her family, and so tenderly beloved by the Duc d'Enghien, her brother, that whoever had won the approbation of his sister, might be assured of the esteem and friendship of this prince. Many people had tried this way in vain, and had mingled other sentiments with those of ambition. Miossens, who afterwards became marshal of France, persevered the longest, and had as little success. I was among his most intimate friends, and he

* Mémoires, p. 399.

spoke to me of his plans. They soon fell to the ground of themselves; he knew it, and repeatedly told me that he had resolved to give them up; but vanity, which was his strongest passion, often prevented him from telling me the truth, and he feigned hopes which he had not, and which I well knew that he could not have. Some time passed in this way, when at last I had reason to believe that I could make more use than he of the friendship and confidence of Madame de Longueville. I made him agree to this himself. He knew the state of my affairs at court; I told him my views, but that consideration for him had hitherto held me back, and that I should not try to form a connection with Madame de Longueville, if he did not leave me free to do so. I confess even, that to obtain this freedom, I deliberately set him against her, without, however, saying anything to him that was not true. He gave her wholly up to me; but he repented of having yielded, when he saw the results of that connection."

François, Prince de Marsillac, who so cynically displays his baseness in the foregoing confession, was the eldest son of the Duc de la Rochefoucauld,—a name under which he has won literary reputation as the author of the famous book of "Maxims." Born in 1613, he was six years older than Madame de Longueville; and, like her, had been introduced to public life at a very early age. He began his career by serving with some distinction; then, going to court, threw himself with an ardour, which contrasts strangely with the unblushing selfishness of his later policy, into the cause of the Queen, who suffered both from the indifference of her husband and the enmity of Richelieu. Some of his biographers trace the cynicism of his middle life to the disappointment which ensued upon the romantic dreams of his youth; but it is surely not unfair to interpret the life of La Rochefoucauld by help of his own theory of human nature, and to attribute both phases of

his character to the influence of Protean self-love. His father owed to Marie de Mediçis his title of duke; for her he had learned to hate and oppose Richelieu, and now trained up his son in the same sentiments. In 1637 we find the young Marsillac forming a romantic plan of carrying off to Brussels both the Queen and her friend, Madlle. de Hautefort. What better means of making Europe ring with his name than the daring feat of depriving Louis XIII. of wife and mistress at a single blow? The conception of the plan rests upon his sole authority; when we turn to the soberer statements of others, we find him content with lending a not very chivalrous help to Madame de Chevreuse when she fled into Spain. She had recourse to him in circumstances which, had he had the true mettle of chivalry in him, would have necessitated his personal help; he sent her on her way with horses and a guide. Even for this he paid with a week in the Bastille, out of which he came resolved to measure swords with Richelieu no more. If he still adhered to the Queen's cause, it was at no personal risk; the brief fever of self-devotion, if ever it burned in that cold heart, was extinguished. Still, when the Queen, by the almost simultaneous deaths of her husband and Richelieu, was placed at the head of affairs, La Rochefoucauld was among those who looked for the reward of fidelity. The government of the strong town of Havre, which remained in the hands of Richelieu's family, was the gift which he chiefly coveted; but his applications were met with excuses and delays which almost amounted to a refusal. He was really playing a double game; coquetting with the party of the Duc de Beaufort, while professing personal devotion to Mazarin; and, subtle as he was, found himself no match for an Italian master of intrigue. The quarrel between Madame de Montbazon and Madame de Longueville led, as we have seen, to the arrest of Beaufort, and the establishment

of Mazarin in undisputed power. Strong now in the personal favour of the Queen, the Cardinal despised the doubtful friendship of La Rochefoucauld, and left him to seek revenge as he could. That revenge he proposed to gain by detaching, through the influence of Madame de Longueville, the vast strength of the Condés from the party of Mazarin and the Queen.

It is hard to characterise La Rochefoucauld's motives, as he himself describes them, without using language which would appear violent and overstrained. To compass personal purposes, in themselves of the meanest and most selfish kind, he deliberately set himself to seduce a woman, whom he declares to have borne up to that time an irreproachable character. While there was everything in her person and circumstances which could lend to unlawful passion such a measure of dignity, such an excuse of sentiment, as it is capable of receiving, he coldly calculates the possible extent of her influence upon her brother, and her consequent value as a political tool. He notes beforehand her womanly pliability to the purposes of those whom she loves, and cheats her into a belief of his affection, that he may make use of a gracious and tender weakness, which a noble heart would have jealously guarded against its own or others' selfishness. And to do all this, he condescended to put on before her the mask of a chivalrous and unselfish gallantry; to wear a disguise which he well knew would kindle her imagination, and through it, touch her heart; while he reserved for the moment, when the chains were fast bound upon the victim, the revelation of his real purposes and true character. There was indeed that about him which might easily rouse the admiration of a young and beautiful woman, who, with a large capacity of affection, had never known what it was to love, and whose ambitious spirit longed for new worlds to conquer. While yet almost a boy he had played an important part in the exciting

politics of his day, and had gained a reputation for careless and romantic gallantry which he little deserved. He had all the air of a grand seigneur; was tall and well made, if not handsome; and had a fatal faculty of pleasing. We have convincing proofs in his "Memoirs" and "Maxims" that in some respects he deserved to be called a man of genius, while his talents were such as would especially show themselves in brilliant and pleasing conversation. He was brave, without having the qualities of a general; inexhaustible in intrigue, without the breadth of view and persistence of aim which are necessary to make a statesman. And he knew how to wield, as well as to win, his influence over Madame de Longueville: while he pulled the strings, he persuaded the puppet of its liberty of action; and when she was but serving the purposes of the most selfish of lovers, flattered her vanity with the thought that she was swaying the destinies of France.*

The opportunity for the development of these selfish intrigues was afforded by a genuine outbreak of national feeling. The government of the Queen-Regent, with Mazarin at its head, had maintained its ascendency over public opinion by help of Condé's brilliant campaigns; and by its alliance with the princes of the blood, had fortified itself against the ambition and discontent of the great nobility. But the year 1648 brought with it danger from a new and unexpected quarter. Mazarin had confided the finances of the kingdom to a countryman of his own, Particelli Emeri, whose administration was at once irregular and oppressive; the common people saw with indignation the riches which the two Italians amassed at the expense of France, and an injudicious attack upon the privileges of the magistracy drew the parliaments of the

* La Rochefoucauld. Mém. première partie. Cousin, Jeunesse de Mad. de Longueville, p. 277, *et seq.* De Retz, Mém. p. 96. Conf. Mad. de Motteville, pp. 228—236.

kingdom to the same side. On every hand arose a cry for Mazarin's downfall; a cry which the Queen-Regent heard with haughty contempt. Then, in August, after much preliminary debate with the Parliament of Paris, came her celebrated attempt to seize the person of Broussel, a magistrate of unsullied character and wide popular influence, whose crime had been an honest and independent opposition to the royal will. More fortunate for the moment than her brother-in-law of England, she pounced upon her prey; Broussel, with one accomplice in his patriotic offence, was carried away from Paris, a prisoner. But the people of Paris rose in a mad frenzy of indignation; barricaded the streets against the entrance of the royal troops; and with one voice demanded Broussel's liberation. And now a new character appeared upon the scene, De Gondi, titular Archbishop of Corinth, *in partibus;* really coadjutor with his uncle in the metropolitan see of Paris; no other than that Cardinal de Retz, whose name best represents to the student the whole perplexed story of the Fronde. Ambitious, dissolute, versatile, faithless, he had yet contrived to ingratiate himself with the citizens, and now put himself forward as their mediator with the Queen. Almost in the same breath she protested that she would never yield, and yielded. The barricades were thrown down and Broussel entered Paris in triumph.

But the old cause of quarrel between the Court and the Parliament still remained, and many intriguers were ready to blow the smouldering embers of contention into a flame. The party known by the name of the Importants, which, under the guidance of the Duc de Beaufort, had disputed the ministry with Mazarin, caught at the opportunity of a fresh struggle. De Retz had tasted, only for a few hours, the sweets of power, and was unwilling to abandon his schemes of ambition. La Rochefoucauld, in a well-known couplet, which he inscribed under the portrait of Madame de

Longueville, expressed his ostensible reason for throwing himself into the Fronde: —

> "Pour meriter son cœur, pour plaire à ses beaux yeux,
> J'ai fait la guerre aux rois; je l'aurais faite aux Dieux."

But his "Memoirs" confess that he had asked for himself the right to assume at once the title of Duke, which would certainly be his at his father's death, and for his wife the privilege of sitting in the Queen's presence, and of entering the Louvre in her carriage. Mazarin had put him off with promises; the 'tabouret' had been granted to some other ladies; the title of Duke conferred upon one or two old servants of the crown; and La Rochefoucauld hastened from his government of Poitou to drag the Duchesse de Longueville into civil war. What members of her family could she persuade to take the same side, and thus to break the alliance, which ever since the beginning of the reign had united them with the Regent? Her brother Conti obeyed her slightest word; her husband had wrongs of his own, as grave as those of La Rochefoucauld, and of the same nature; but into which scale would Condé throw his sword — Condé, who held the army in his hand, and had just returned from a brilliant victory at Lens? Madame de Longueville employed in vain all her arts of persuasion; she had quarrelled with her brother at the time of her first attachment to La Rochefoucauld, and now could not detach him from the Queen and Mazarin. On the 6th of January, 1649, the King, his brother, Mazarin, Orleans, Condé, all fled to St. Germains, leaving Paris in possession of the Fronde. A prince of the blood was necessary to act as leader of the rebellion; and Conti, still half a churchman, who had never seen a battle, was pitted against his brother, who in war at least was the spoiled child of fortune.

So began that first portion of the Fronde which is dis-

tinguished as the War of Paris. Condé, with a few troops, sat down before a city which he could not invest, and Conti sheltered himself behind walls which, against any other enemy, it would have been impossible to defend. No one, except the Parliament, which, amid the throng of private interests, drops more and more out of sight, is much in earnest; no one, except the insignificant peasants who have to feed the armies, runs the risk of much suffering; and jests, and pasquinades, and lampoons, are the weapons most in request. A tangled web of lesser intrigues is woven over the main action of the war: now a prince of the house of Lorraine, true to its tradition of rebellion, disputes the command with Conti; now the Duc de Beaufort, young, handsome, grandson of Henri IV. and La Belle Gabrielle, wins the heart of the Parisian mob, and is crowned "Roi des Halles." A negotiation is set on foot, but thwarted by Mazarin's timely bribes, to bring Turenne and his army to fight Condé; and an envoy from Spain is received, in spite of patriotic remonstrances from magistrates, who still see in the Fronde a justifiable resistance to oppression. At the very centre of all stands Madame de Longueville, triumphant in beauty, in popularity, in the first sweet consciousness of political power. At the commencement of the war the populace, inclined to disbelieve that Conti could intend to maintain the cause of the Parliament against his brother, had demanded hostages for his fidelity. Madame de Longueville and the Duchesse de Bouillon answered the call, and with their children betook themselves to the Hôtel de Ville. "I escorted them," says De Retz*, "with a kind of triumph, to the Hôtel de Ville. The small-pox had left to Madame de Longueville, as I have already said in another place, all the splendour of her beauty, ... and that of

* Mémoires, p. 93.

Madame de Bouillon, although a little faded, was still very brilliant. Imagine, I beg, these two upon the steps of the Hôtel de Ville, more beautiful from an apparent, which was not however a real negligence of dress. Each held in her arms one of her children, as beautiful as their mothers. The Grève was full of people to the tops of the roofs; all the men uttered cries of joy; all the women wept for tenderness." There, a few days after, Madame de Longueville was delivered of a son, the true child of the Fronde. The morning after his birth he was baptized by the Coadjutor; Madame de Bouillon, with the Provost of the Merchants, held him at the font, and gave him the name of Charles Paris. And the people lashed themselves into an ecstasy of enthusiasm, as if war and famine had not been at their gates.

The siege of Paris, which lasted through the three first months of 1649, was then terminated by a treaty of peace between the Queen and the malcontents. It is sadly characteristic of the spirit of the struggle that the Parliament, which truly, even if in a mistaken way, contended for great principles and public interests, was compelled to yield everything to the royal authority; while the great nobles sold their submission at the price of innumerable private advantages. Every one of the leaders made separate terms; nor did La Rochefoucauld forget the 'tabouret,' —the stool in the royal presence,—for the wife, who appears in his biography only as the mother of his children, and the pretext for this sorry ambition. One by one they came in, and went through the forms of a personal reconciliation with the Queen. Madame de Motteville tells us, not without a concealed sense of satisfaction, how, among the rest, our heroine was obliged to abandon her popular throne in Paris to do homage to the Regent. Anne of Austria received her in bed; Madame de Longueville blushed, stammered, murmured a few words, of which

"Madame" was alone audible, either to the Queen or her attentive waiting-maid, and appeared grateful when the latter turned the conversation to some indifferent subject.* A family reconciliation had already taken place, and it soon began to be seen that all the influence of the Condés would henceforward be exercised in the same direction.

It was from the very magnitude of this power that the next danger arose. Conti and Longueville had been confirmed in all their governments and other dignities; while Condé, who before the War of Paris had been loaded with honours, now assumed the position of one to whom the royal authority owed its preservation. Two parties still subsisted in the state, the party of Mazarin, and that of the Fronde; one headed by the Queen, resolved to support the minister; the other, a many-headed monster, sworn to compass his downfall;—to which would the Condés incline? At first there was no apparent rupture between Mazarin and the Prince, although the demands of the latter grew every day more exorbitant, and his arrogance more offensive to the dignity and independence of the crown. M. de Longueville was Governor of Normandy, a province in which, during the late war, he had levied an army in support of the Fronde; Condé now asked for him the government of Pont de l'Arche—a fortified town, which might become a stronghold in case of rebellion. After much hesitation, the grant was yielded to repeated solicitations, which almost took the form of menace. Then came the demand for La Rochefoucauld's dukedom, and 'tabouret,' and right of entrance to the Louvre. This too had been complied with, when the whole nobility of France, except the personal adherents of the Condés, rose in hot indignation, and compelled the Queen to revoke the grant of privileges for which no adequate prece-

* Mad. de Motteville, Mém. p. 274.

dent could be found. The town of Hâvre de Grace,—which, like Pont de l'Arche, was an important strategical position in regard to the province of Normandy,—had for its governor the young Duc de Richelieu, great nephew of the Cardinal, and still a minor. Madame de Longueville persuaded him into marriage with a personal friend of her own, a lady much older than himself; and Condé, in open defiance of law and custom, assisted and defended the match. But when, on the contrary, Mazarin, not unnaturally distrusting such a friend, attempted to strengthen his position by marrying his niece to the Duc de Mercœur, an illegitimate grandson of Henri IV., Condé resisted the marriage with all the weight of his influence But he did not stop here; he publicly insulted the Cardinal, and encouraged the ridiculous pretensions made by one of his own friends and followers to the good graces of the Queen. The instinct of self-preservation conspired with the desire of revenge to induce the Queen and her minister to disembarrass themselves of an ally, whose enmity could hardly be more fatal than his friendship. But for this purpose it was necessary to make a compact with the party of the Fronde. De Retz was allured to the side of Mazarin, by the vague promise of a cardinal's hat, and on the 18th of January, 1650, the great blow was struck. On that day the Prince de Condé, his brother, and his brother-in-law were arrested at the Palais Royal, whither they had been summoned to a council of state. While the treachery was being accomplished, Anne of Austria was on her knees in her oratory, praying for its success; and Mazarin, it is said, so confident in his craft, as to have sent Condé to prison on a warrant which he had himself been induced to sign. But the Cardinal was too well acquainted with the secret springs of Condé's policy, to imagine that so long as Madame de Longueville and La Rochefoucauld were at liberty, the party was reduced to inaction. His plans, however, for

their arrest were not well laid, and they escaped. The prisoners were at once sent to Vincennes, and the heroine of the Hôtel de Ville, in whose ears the applause of the people of Paris had hardly yet ceased to ring, had the mortification, as she turned her back upon the fickle city, to hear the feux-de-joie which celebrated the arrest of her brothers and her husband.

The imprisonment of the Princes was the signal for a general flight of their adherents. Among others Madame de Longueville, accompanied by her step-daughter and La Rochefoucauld, betook herself to Normandy, a province of which M. de Longueville had been governor, and which had risen to support his pretensions during the war of Paris. She deceived herself with the hope that the nobility, the parliament, the people of Normandy would enthusiastically combine to demand her husband's and her brothers' liberation; that a similar feeling would be manifested throughout the provinces which Condé and Conti had governed; and that before long, she herself, at the head of a great counter-revolution, would be able to dictate terms to the haughty Austrian and the Italian favourite, who had thus trampled upon the pride of Bourbon. But she was miserably disappointed. When she arrived at Rouen, wearied with her hurried flight from Paris, she found that the governor, the parliament, and even the municipality of that important city, had already sent an envoy to the Queen, with assurances of their unshaken fidelity. She turned to Hâvre, which she hoped she had made secure by that very marriage of the Duc de Richelieu, which had been the spark to cause the explosion. Repulsed here too, she fled, with a gradually lessening train of attendants, to Dieppe, where the governor consented to receive her. But neither entreaties nor promises could induce him to do more than offer her a temporary asylum.

At Dieppe, La Rochefoucauld left her, to try the fortune

of war in his own province of Poitou; and Madlle. de Longueville to escape from the control of a step-mother whom she hated, and to conclude a sullen truce with the Court. Meanwhile the Queen had brought the young King into Normandy; and the royal party passed from city to city, amid an acclaim of welcome, which was galling enough to the disappointed wanderer at Dieppe. Anne of Austria could afford, in the midst of her success, to be generous; and sent a message to Madame de Longueville, requiring her to repair to Colommiers, whither her step-daughter had already gone. A fair inference might be, that future quietness would earn oblivion of the past; but Madame de Longueville's pride was yet far from being tamed into submission. She made some excuse for not immediately obeying the Queen's command, and meanwhile prepared for flight.

Turenne had taken refuge in Stenai; a strong place on the frontiers of Champagne, which had formerly been held by Condé; and the plan of our adventuress was to escape to Holland by sea, to join Turenne, and to use, if she could, Spanish money and Spanish troops for the release of the prisoners. On some night early in February, therefore, she escaped from the castle of Dieppe by an unguarded postern, and with her waiting-women and one or two gentlemen who had not yet abandoned her, walked six miles along the shore to a little bay, where she proposed to embark in a vessel which was cruising off the coast for the purpose of receiving her. The night was stormy; to reach the ship it was necessary to go on board a fishing boat, which lay near the beach. Here her triumphs and troubles nearly came to an untimely end; for the sailor who was carrying her on board the boat, dropped her into the water, from which, in the hurry and confusion of the moment, she was with difficulty rescued. By the time she was sufficiently recovered to make a second attempt, the

wind had risen so high as to prevent all hope of an embarkation; but the resolute lady procured horses, mounted with her women behind the gentlemen of the party, and before daylight was safe in the house of a friend. She learned that the captain of the vessel which she had in vain tried to reach, was in the Cardinal's pay; and for a fortnight, during which she wandered from one uncertain asylum to another, could not procure a second ship. At last, in male attire, and assuming the character of a gentleman who, having fought a duel, was fleeing from the law, she obtained a passage in an English vessel from Hâvre to Rotterdam. In Holland the fugitive was once more a Princess. She met with a reception which recalled the brilliant days of her progress to Munster. The Prince of Orange begged her to take up her abode at the Hague. The lieutenants of the King of Spain in the Netherlands welcomed her with almost regal honours. But her heart was with some at least of the prisoners at Vincennes; and she hastened to Stenai, where Turenne had drawn around him a body of troops still faithful to Condé. Hence with the help of Spain, she hoped to make herself formidable to the Queen.

Meanwhile Condé's long-neglected wife was exerting herself on his behalf with as much courage as his sister, and at first with better hope of success. With her son, a boy of seven years old, she threw herself into Montrond, a fortified place which was still faithful to her cause; and thence, surrounded by the chief members of the party, proceeded to Bordeaux. The parliament of that city had a quarrel of their own with Mazarin; and when the young princess, clad in deep mourning and holding her boy in her hand, appealed to them to succour the conqueror of Rocroi against the minister's Italian craft, espoused her cause with all the enthusiasm of the South, and promised to live and die at her command. But presently the King,

accompanied by his mother and the Cardinal, came southwards: Normandy, as we have seen, had given him a loyal reception; Burgundy, Condé's own province, followed the example; and now Guienne recoiled before the presence of that civil war, which when distant it had professed itself ready to encounter. Some ambiguous promises of setting Condé at liberty—promises which were never meant to be kept,—were all that the poor Princess could gain in exchange for the city of Bordeaux. And Mazarin, thinking that his prisoners were hardly safe in the neighbourhood of Paris, removed them to Hâvre.

The year wore away wearily to Madame de Longueville at Stenai. She was anxious to risk everything for the cause in which she was engaged, and could accomplish nothing. Turenne owned her fascination, and entered willingly into all her plans; but the Spaniards, whose policy it was to amuse the leaders of the Fronde with promises of support, and yet to leave them to weaken themselves and their country by civil war, made more promises than they performed. In October, 1650, her mother died. "Go tell that poor wretch at Stenai," she said to the friend who watched by her death-bed, "the state in which you see me, that she may learn how to die." Charlotte de Montmorençi had never wavered in her loyalty to the Queen, and to her own good name; and now at the last looked down with unfeigned pity on the daughter who, in the full consciousness of beauty and ambition, was false to both. Then, at the very end of the year, the only military operation which Turenne undertook was unsuccessful; he lost the battle of Rethel to the royal troops; and Mazarin, who had insisted that the action should take place, appeared before the world as victorious over the army of Condé, commanded by one who, next to Condé, was the greatest captain of France.

But the characteristic of this wretched period is, that fate

dogs the very heels of success; and that Prince or Minister is never so near his downfall as when he has apparently triumphed over every enemy. The principle of the Fronde — if it can be said to have had a principle — was hostility to Mazarin; and now what had De Retz and his party gained by their opposition to the Condés, but the establishment of Mazarin in undisputed omnipotence? Such was far from being the restless Coadjutor's aim. He endeavoured to play Mazarin against Condé, and Condé against Mazarin, only that he might secure, when the opportunity came, the triumph of a third party, of which the feeble and irresolute Duke of Orleans was to be the apparent, and himself, Cardinal and Archbishop of Paris, the real head. So now, when Mazarin, intoxicated with uninterrupted success, lost, like Condé before him, all feeling of moderation, the Fronde reconciled itself with the party of the Princes. A negotiation, in which the Princess Palatine and La Rochefoucauld represented the high contracting parties, was sealed by the proposal of a marriage between the Prince de Conti and the daughter of Madame de Chevreuse. Paris was soon roused by agents who were skilled in the manufacture of popular tumults; and Mazarin, in a sudden transport of terror, fled, leaving behind him the Queen and her son. The gates of the city, which had been open for him, were closed against their exit: nobility, parliament, people, demanded with one voice the liberation of the Princes. The Queen, who was in reality a prisoner, granted everything. But Mazarin had been too quick for her. He anticipated the arrival of the royal messenger at Hâvre, and himself opened the prison doors which he had shut thirteen months before. It is now February, 1651: Mazarin betakes himself to Germany, whence he still secretly directs his mistress' councils; and the Princes return once more in triumph to Paris.

The story of the Fronde becomes more and more difficult to tell, as it draws near its end; if the actors of the tragi-comedy do not change their characters, they continually assume fresh disguises, till the puzzled spectator almost gives up the attempt to trace the motives, and discern the object of their action. Condé, from his cell at Hâvre, had been strong enough to drive Mazarin from France; he and all his party were reinstated in their old, and rewarded with new dignities; and the parliament of Paris fulminated angry decrees against the absent Cardinal. And yet in but a few months more Condé is again a fugitive, and this time in arms against the King.

The mist of intrigue which hides the history of the period is hard to pierce; but one fact stands out clear from the confusion, that the Prince quarrelled with the party of the Fronde, only a few weeks after he had regained his liberty by its help. The key-stone of the alliance had been the marriage of the Prince de Conti with Madlle. de Chevreuse, a bargain which the bridegroom, supported by his family, now refused to confirm. Historians exhaust themselves in conjectures as to the secret motive of the refusal, and a favourite theory is to lay the blame of the fresh rupture on Madame de Longueville. She exercised over the feeble and wayward Prince the influence rather of a mistress than a sister, and was jealous lest her place should be taken by a wife, whose beauty was a dozen years younger than her own, and almost as brilliant. The true reason lies nearer the surface; Madlle. de Chevreuse was notoriously the mistress of the Coadjutor; and a prince of the royal house, however low the morals of the time, might well decline to purchase the triumph of his party at the price of a tainted wife. The bargain had been made for him, and it was not till after his liberation that he learnt the true state of the case. That Madame de Longueville, who cannot have been ignorant of the

relation between De Retz and Madlle. de Chevreuse, should have made such a compact, is reason enough for blame, without adding the reproach of wanton and useless perfidy in breaking it.

Madame de Chevreuse and the Coadjutor were furious; and the Queen, deprived of her beloved Mazarin, with whom she was united, if report speaks truly, by tenderer ties than those which usually connect Regent and Minister, plotted with them the downfall and assassination of Condé. The latter, warned in time, and perhaps not sorry to have a pretext for decisive action, suddenly withdrew from Paris to St. Maur, where, surrounded by his friends and adherents, he held a court which rivalled and threatened that of the Queen. When, in September, 1651, Louis XIV. attained his thirteenth year, and with it his legal majority, Condé refused to take any part in the rejoicings, on the ground that his life was not safe within reach of the Queen and her servants. In truth, he was already preparing to try the issue of civil war. But the task of creating a party able to counterbalance the power of the crown was not so easy as it had been; men were growing weary of a struggle which was manifestly continued only for selfish purposes. La Rochefoucauld, whose ambition was but changeful and indecisive compared with De Retz's steady aim at self-aggrandisement, counselled intrigue and negotiation. The Duc de Longueville openly abandoned his party, retired to his government of Normandy, and there, almost king of the province, maintained a neutrality which wanted little to convert it into loyalty. To Madame de Longueville belongs a chief share in the shame of renewed war. Her husband had at last awakened to a knowledge of the real nature of her connection with La Rochefoucauld, and peremptorily demanded that, abandoning the party of Condé, she should return to him in Normandy. The indication of duty was

plain enough; but love and pride drew all the other way. Her affection for La Rochefoucauld was already growing cold, and was soon to be abruptly and harshly extinguished; but her brothers were far dearer to her than her husband; she was a Bourbon but never a Longueville; and the honour of her house was involved in Condé's triumph. She had even yet hardly passed her thirtieth year, and was wont to see the great nobles and captains of the time vie for her smile, and submit themselves to the guidance of her intellect. How should she, who had braved the Regent and concluded treaties of alliance with Spain, return to Rouen to live, a suspected and guilty woman, with a husband to whom she was indifferent, and who was wholly governed by a daughter whom she hated? So again she was deaf to all promptings of her better nature, and urged her brothers once more to tempt the fortune of war.

I cannot tell in detail the story of the last years of the Fronde; it is the less necessary as Madame de Longueville's share in it may be described in few words. Guienne was the province in which Condé was strongest, and Bordeaux the real centre of the war. Here Madame de Longueville ruled supreme. Conti, in the absence of his brother, nominally directed the councils of the party, and one of Condé's ablest lieutenants was responsible for the military operations. But Madame de Longueville, sincerely anxious for her brothers' success, and animated by the private motives of which I have spoken, threw her whole energy into the war, and gave up the cause only when it was manifestly hopeless. Except the spectacle of a resolute woman struggling to the end against overmastering difficulties, there is nothing noble or heroic in the story. The motives of the contest were unblushingly selfish; and the combatants were unscrupulous in their choice of weapons. Now an alliance is

sought with Cromwell, and now with Spain; no matter what sacrifice is made of the honour and territory of France, so that Condé can set his foot on the neck of Mazarin. The precedent of an alliance with the mob, destined to be fatally followed in France, is established; and the Reign of Terror is not without a lesser prototype in the history of the Fronde of Bordeaux. It is the last foul dregs of a hateful time; when selfishness which had before been only careless, is urged by fear into deliberate cruelty, and despair makes wantonness insane.

But Bordeaux, though the centre, is not the scene of the main action of the war. Many armies are in the field. Condé and his adherents have their stronghold in Guienne; the Queen and her son place their chief reliance upon Turenne, who, like Condé, has changed sides. Mazarin has heard of his mistress' distress; and from his own private resources has levied an army of ten thousand men, with which he marches from the Rhine to her help. But the Fronde, still a living party in Paris, is true to its old tradition of enmity to Mazarin; and the Duke of Orleans raises troops, which, professing loyalty to the King, are intended to protect him against his only protector. Condé marched on Paris, and at the very gates fought a bloody battle with Turenne. The issue was doubtful: for whom should the city declare? Orleans hesitated; while his daughter — the women perform every action of the Fronde which approaches to heroism — commanded the gates to be opened to admit Condé's shattered battalions, and directed the cannon of the Bastille upon the royal army. Then followed confusion, anarchy, massacre in Paris; till Condé, having seen his troops melt away from his standard in a flood of foul license, evacuated the city, and throwing himself into the arms of his Spanish allies, departed to make a traitorous use of his military genius, in fighting

the battles of the foreigner against France. Mazarin, too, once more bending his head to the storm, retired beyond the frontier. And now, at last, on the 21st of October, 1652, Louis XIV. and his mother entered the capital in triumph. The Duke of Orleans was exiled to Blois, to spend in idle regrets the brief remnant of his life. De Retz, with his Cardinal's hat as the sole trophy of the Fronde, was imprisoned in Vincennes. The rest followed naturally: Mazarin's retreat had been no more than a trick to ensure the royal triumph over the remnant of the Fronde; and in February, 1653, he returned master of the kingdom. The proudest of French nobles contended for the honour of his alliance; and one of the seven nieces, whose marriages connect so many great houses with the once obscure Abbate of the Abruzzi, became the wife of the Prince de Conti. Perhaps the moral of the Fronde may all be summed up in an answer made by La Rochefoucauld to the Cardinal in the very midst of the struggle. The cynical duke, who afterwards accepted a pension from the minister, and intrigued to introduce his son to the intimacy of the King, found himself, one day during the progress of some negotiations, in the Cardinal's carriage with two other Frondeurs. "Who, only a week ago, would have thought to see us four," said Mazarin, "all riding in one coach?" "What would you have?" answered La Rochefoucauld; "tout arrive en France, — everything happens in France."

The contemporary memoirs of the Fronde, which are all written with some purpose of excuse or accusation, may be justly charged with hypocrisy whenever they attempt to rise to the height of moral judgment. But even the later historians of the period seem to catch the infection, and treat the whole series of events as if they formed a political game of chess, in which the sudden turns of fortune, and contending subtlety of skill, might fairly excite the liveliest

intellectual, without unsealing the fountains of moral interest. The great part played in the Fronde by the wives and mistresses and sisters of the combatants, throws a factitious air of romance over the fray; and memoirs and manuscript collections are full of bon-mots, ballads, epigrams, brilliant enough to draw away the eye from the sombre wickedness of the passions, of which they were the lighter and transitory expression. Voltaire * even ventures to contrast the gaiety of heart in which the wars of the Fronde were waged, with the determined fury of the contemporary civil contest in England, and seems to think that the advantage is all on the side of his own nation. A more instructive contrast might be drawn between the social condition of the two countries, equally afflicted by intestine discord. Puritan and Cavalier fought for a religious and a political principle; loyalty was matched against liberty; personal ambition was accidental, not essential, to the struggle. The fight was fought out to the end with hearty good-will by both parties; fathers and sons took opposite sides; and brother found himself in hostile array against brother. But we hear little or nothing in contemporary history of the misery of the people: towns were not sacked, nor homesteads harried; neither famine nor pestilence followed in the track of war. Civil wars were never waged with so little private suffering as those of England in the seventeenth century; and never brought after them more misery than those which, at the same time, desolated France. We have already seen something of this in the letters of La Mère Angélique †; innumerable witnesses might be brought to confirm her testimony, and to give it a wider application. It is impossible here to display the evidence in detail; it is enough to say that the sufferings of the common people were in direct ratio

* Siècle de Louis XIV., vol. i. p. 262. † Vol. i. p. 224.

to the absence of political principle in the leaders of the war. The very tone of the memoirs, while it confirms the fact, authenticates this explanation of it. The aristocratic annalists narrate only the shifting combination of parties, the ramifying thread of intrigue, the steady foresight of private interest,—and have not a word to waste on the wretched citizens, the starving husbandmen, at whose expense the great game was played. But now and then some less interested spectator half-unconsciously raises the veil, and we see the vast mass of misery, helplessly silent, behind.

The years of the Fronde are the period of Madame de Longueville's life which her biographer would, if he dared, willingly pass by. She must bear, in common with all the chief actors of the scene, the reproach of a guilty indifference to the real interests of France, a wanton carelessness of human tears and blood. Perhaps those who, from proximity to a throne or the possession of political power, are accustomed to look upon men in the mass, as an instrument to be wielded for great public or private ends, rarely feel the keen sense of personal responsibility in these things; and in the case of Madame de Longueville, half a lifetime of repentance and reparation is to be weighed against the thoughtlessness of a few years. But we may fairly urge for her the additional excuse that throughout the Fronde, she sought and obtained nothing for herself. The desire to please, not unnatural in a beautiful and accomplished woman, and which in her at least was as near akin to love as to vanity, was at once excited and gratified by the opportunity of playing a great part in politics which the Fronde offered to her. It is true that she wanted resolution to put away the intoxicating cup from her lips before she had drained it to the dregs, and urged Condé to civil war, that she might escape the control of a husband whom she did not love and had

irreparably injured. But from first to last she struggles, not for herself, but for others. Now she is the instrument of La Rochefoucauld's petty ambition, and now contends for what she thinks her brothers' just pre-eminence in the state. In the various treaties with the Queen, every article of which is a fresh illustration of the small selfishness of the Frondeurs, she makes no stipulations for herself. All she wins from the Fronde is a woful consciousness of her own weakness, and the desire henceforward to abandon the life in which she could so little trust her own guidance, for one in which wiser hands than hers should lead her safely back to God.*

Before the Fronde of Bordeaux had finally come to its inglorious end, Madame de Longueville hid herself in a convent of Benedictine nuns of that city, and with a mind, in which weariness and despair were just beginning to assume the form of repentance, looked out upon the future. She was almost alone in the world. Her mother was dead; one brother an exile; the other, alienated from her by some of the wretched intrigues which had made such remorseless sport with character and happiness. She felt no desire to rejoin her husband, over whom Madlle. de Longueville exercised undisputed sway, and besides, could not foretell the manner of her reception. And La Rochefoucauld's love had long been changed into mean and bitter hatred. Perhaps the first ardour of their attachment had been cooled by her long absence at Stenai; but after the

* I have found it impossible, in this necessarily brief account of the Fronde, to indicate the source from which every fact has been taken. Besides Villefore's Life of Mad. de Longueville, and M. V. Cousin's elaborate volumes, I have to acknowledge obligations to Michelet's brilliant, but somewhat imaginative sketch, "Richelieu et La Fronde." At the same time my chief debt is to the memoirs of the time, particularly to those of Cardinal de Retz, Mad. de Motteville, and La Rochefoucauld. I have also consulted those of "Mademoiselle," and of the Duchesse de Nemours, Mad. de Longueville's cold-hearted, and prejudiced step-daughter.

liberation of the Princes she had still obeyed his guidance, and it was by their joint advice that Condé had plunged into civil war. But on a journey into Berri, which preceded the breaking out of the troubles, Madame de Longueville had shown herself pleased by the homage of the Duc de Nemours, a brave and handsome cavalier, who at that time embraced the Princes' party. He was the avowed lover of Madame de Chatillon, a lady who rivalled Madame de Longueville both in beauty and in influence over the mind of Condé. It is easy to understand the temptation which the attentions of the Duc de Nemours offered to one who delighted to exercise her all-conquering powers of fascination; she could at once strike a blow at a rival whom she disliked and feared, and confirm in his attachment to her brothers' cause an important ally. The journey lasted but a few days, and it is needless as well as unfair to put a worse interpretation upon Madame de Longueville's conduct than is justified by the supposition of such motives as we have ascribed to her. But La Rochefoucauld seized upon the opportunity greedily, as one who had long waited for it; and soon published to the world that his love was dead. Worse than this, he insinuated into Condé's mind suspicions of his sister's entire fidelity to the cause; persuaded M. de Nemours, who had again entered into bondage to Madame de Chatillon, publicly to mark his indifference to the object of his brief devotion; and finally succeeded in shutting out Madame de Longueville from her brother's councils. He tells the tale himself as coolly as he recounts the motives which once induced him to win her heart, that he might coin it into political capital. Of course, with him it is only one instance the more of woman's fickleness, and the ill-requited constancy of man. When in the battle of the Porte St. Antoine he was almost blinded by a gun-shot, he parodied the lines in which he had once falsely paraded an all-sacrificing self-devotion:—

"Pour ce cœur inconstant, qu'enfin je connais mieux,
J'ai fait la guerre aux Rois, j'en ai perdu les yeux."

Each version is as untrue as the other.*

In pleasing contrast with La Rochefoucauld's faithlessness, stands the unshaken fidelity to our heroine of two humble friends who belonged to the circle of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, George and Madeleine de Scudery. The former was the nominal, the latter the real author of that voluminous romance, the Grand Cyrus, once the delight of more than one generation of novel readers, in which Madame de Longueville herself, under the name of Mandane, played a conspicuous part. The successive publication of its ten volumes was contemporary with the wars of the Fronde; the first saw the light in 1649, the last in 1653. When the first two appeared, they were dedicated to Madame de Longueville, then the idol of the Parisian populace; her portrait adorned the frontispiece, her beauty and her wit were the subjects of rapturous adulation. The third volume was issued about the end of the same year; the fourth in 1650, when Madame de Longueville was escaping at the peril of her life into Holland; the fifth, a little later, when she was lingering in weary inaction at Stenai. The Scuderys had no sympathy with the Fronde; and the brother, whose name appeared on the title-page of the romance, was afterwards deprived by Mazarin, of the government of Nôtre Dame de la Garde, for this very fidelity to the friendship of the proscribed Princess. But every volume as it was published, bore her arms, and echoed with her praises, whether it appeared at the moment of her prosperous or adverse fortune. The tenth and last issued from the press in Sep-

* Mém. de Madame de Nemours, p. 655. Mém. de la Rochefoucauld, p. 478. V. Cousin, Mad. de Longueville pendant La Fronde, p. 86, *et seq.*, p. 139, *et seq.*

tember, 1653, at the time when Madame de Longueville, almost friendless, was waiting for the final decision of the court as to her place of residence. She had never given more than thanks and love to her constant friends, and now had no more to give; her affection was dangerous; and there was no longer any hope of a sudden change of fortune, which might lift high in air those who were grovelling in the dust. Yet the tenth volume of the Grand Cyrus bore her portrait like the first; and the dedication repeated all the courteous devotion which had waited upon her youthful steps, at the Hôtel de Rambouillet.*

Throughout the days of her troubled prosperity, Madame de Longueville had never quite lost sight of her old friends, the Carmelite sisters of the Fauxbourg St. Jacques. She had kept up an often interrupted intercourse with Madlle. du Vigean; and, on occasion of her mother's death, had received and answered a letter of condolence from the Superior. She turned once more to them in her present abandonment and distress. To the Prioress she writes †: "Just now I desire nothing so ardently as to see the end of this war, that I may come and cast in my lot with you for the rest of my days. I cannot do this till after the peace, by reason of the misfortune of my life, which was given to me only that I might experience whatever the world has of bitterest and hardest. What has made me take the resolution, of which I have just spoken, is, that if I have had any attachments to the world, of whatever kind you may imagine, they are broken, and even crushed. This news will not be unpleasant to you. . . . I desire that to give me a feeling for God, which as yet I have not, and yet without which I should nevertheless act as I have said, if the peace were made, you would do me

* Cousin, La Société Française, &c. vol. i. p. 28, *et seq.*

† Villefore, part ii. p. 65.

the favour to write to me often, and to confirm me in my horror of the world. Send me word what books you would advise me to read." There is little religious feeling in this letter: it is the voice of disappointment seeking relief in a quarter to which Madame de Longueville's theory of religion, and the recollection of a more disinterested and genuine aspiration, alike pointed. Presently came an order from the court that she should repair to Montreuil, an estate in Anjou belonging to her husband; then, after a time, she was permitted to take up her abode at Moulins. Here was the tomb of her uncle Montmorençi, whose fate had so excited her childish commiseration; and here his widow wore away her days as Superior of a convent of "Filles de Sainte Marie." The chord of the former association was once more struck; and the Abbess, who lived to lament an old attempt at revolution, took to her heart the niece who was the victim of a new one. Little by little the spectacle of the cloister peace, and of a virtue which seemed to have emerged from the region of conflict into one of harmony with itself and with God; as well as pious reading and kind advice, seem to have wakened to growth the germ of religious feeling which had long slept in Madame de Longueville's heart. At last, on the 2nd of August,—she has herself preserved the date,—the crisis came. As she was reading, she says: "It was as if a curtain were drawn from before the eyes of my spirit; all the charms of the truth, assembled in a single object, presented themselves before me; faith, which had remained as if dead, and buried beneath my passions, was renewed; I found myself like one who, after a deep sleep, in which she had dreamed that she was great, happy, honoured, esteemed by all the world, wakes all at once, and finds herself loaded with chains, pierced with wounds, beaten down by weariness,

and confined in a gloomy prison." * The sincerity of this conversion may be best vouched for by the fact that, after a stay of a few months at Moulins, she made no attempt to hide herself from shame and duty in the cloister, but went quietly back to Normandy, and did her best for her husband and children.

M. de Longueville survived till 1663. The story of his conduct to his wife during these nine years is soon told. He took her back without reproach, and behaved to her with a gentlemanly courtesy, which in time suffered the growth of confidence and esteem. She did not make her peace with the Queen as easily as with her husband; Condé was now commanding the armies of Spain, and every fresh success which he gained over the generals of his country was cause of fresh suspicion against his sister. She was but thirty-five, her beauty had hardly lost its first brilliance, her powers of pleasing were unimpaired, and she might yet, thought Mazarin and his mistress, break away from a seclusion and a restraint so foreign to all her wishes, and become the centre of a new Fronde.† But we do not find any evidence that such a temptation assailed her. Though her heart, as ever, went with Condé, and beat quicker than its wont at the news of his victories or reverses, she really desired, and patiently waited for, a reconciliation with the court. At first she

* Villefore, part ii. p. 73.

† It was long before Mazarin ceased to fear the heroines of the Fronde. When at the peace of the Pyrenees in 1660, the Spanish ambassador made it a stipulation that Condé should be restored to his rank and dignities in France, a question arose as to Madame de Longueville. Don Luis de Haro remarked with some shade of contempt, that one woman could not surely disturb the tranquillity of the state. "That is all very well for you Spaniards," answered Mazarin, "your women trouble themselves about nothing but lovemaking; but in France it is not so, and we have three, the Duchesse de Longueville, the Princess Palatine, and the Duchesse de Chevreuse, who are capable of ruling or upsetting three great kingdoms."—*Villefore*, part ii. p. 109.

did not quit Normandy, which was her habitual residence throughout these years; then we find her taking her place as a princess of the blood at the great festivals of royalty; at last she is chosen by her husband to convey his complaints and wishes to the ear of the King. M. de Longueville did not interfere with her religious observances, except to protest when they seemed likely to degenerate into excesses of austerity; and Port Royal, when the Duchess adopted its guidance, had the good sense to teach her, that no duty could be so imperative as that of watching over her husband's declining years. Before he died he grew to value her kindness, as well as to claim it as a right; and she had the satisfaction of attempting to expiate the unfaithful thoughtlessness of her youth, by years of watchful and tender care.*

Madame de Longueville's repentance was almost immediately followed by a still more startling conversion, that of her brother Conti. He had been originally destined for the Church, and throughout the wars of the Fronde had continued to hold the numerous and wealthy benefices which had been heaped upon the royal aspirant to ecclesiastical honours. But he had never taken orders; and as soon as he had made his peace with the King, cast about for some means of irrevocably cutting himself off from the possibility of entering the Church. Condé, long before, had married a niece of Richelieu, and so obtained the command of armies; Mazarin had seven nieces for whom he wished to find husbands; why not repeat so successful a stroke of policy? The Cardinal could desire nothing better than this opportunity of allying himself with the blood royal, and Anne Marie Martinozzi, a girl of seventeen, was ordered to bestow herself on the humpbacked bridegroom, the flagrant vices of whose life were not

* Villefore, part ii. p. 77, *et seq.* Cousin, Mad. de Sablé, p. 183.

atoned for by manliness or independence of character. He was not even recommended by any sincerity of passion; Mazarin had two nieces still unmarried, and he cared not which fell to his share; his object, as he openly said, "was to marry the Cardinal." Yet, after the marriage, another phase of family history seemed likely to be repeated, for Louis XIV. fell in love with Anne Martinozzi, as Henri IV. had once done with her husband's mother, Charlotte de Montmorençi. Conti, who was commanding on the frontiers of Spain the army which he had bought by his marriage, at once sent for his wife, who joined him in Languedoc at the end of 1654. It was hardly necessary; the Princesse de Conti was made of other clay than the facile ladies whom Louis XIV. was accustomed to solicit, and publicly repulsed him in a way which, if he ever recollected it among the easy victories of his manhood, must have seemed strange to the all-conquering King.

The young Italian lady, whom fate had thus so strangely united with a weak, wayward, debauched Prince, was, even in her girlhood, of a grave, resolute, almost severe character; unable to accustom herself to the ways of courts; true in word as in life. It is not therefore strange, when we remember what Catholic engines of conversion are, that her husband should first have felt their efficacy. He had been in leading-strings all his life, obeying the guidance now of his sister, now of a mistress, now, even of a servant; in 1655 the confessor's turn came. He had gone to Pézenas, to represent the King at the meeting of the Estates of Languedoc, and there received the homage of Pavillon, Bishop of Alet. Conti, worn out with debauch, was lying wearily in bed, wondering, perhaps, at the bitterness of "the husks that the swine did eat," when the good Bishop came to pay the formal visit demanded by etiquette. Something, said the Prince, seemed to whisper to him that here was the man to whom he must entrust

himself if he would be delivered from his sin and his fear, and the visit of compliment was converted into a serious interchange of confession and advice. Pavillon knew only too well the character of the penitent with whom he had to deal; for the south-west provinces of France had been the head-quarters of the Fronde in its latter years. So he prescribed a rigid and long course of penitence; recommended the Prince to the care of M. Ciron, a pious ecclesiastic of Toulouse who happened to be then in Paris, and consented that he should receive absolution only after nine months' perseverance in self-mortification had proved the reality of his repentance.

It was not till two years afterwards that Madame de Conti, then only in her nineteenth year, agreed to place herself by her husband's side, under the care of the Bishop and M. Ciron. The change must have been wrought in her mind little by little; partly, perhaps, by Pavillon's almost savage sincerity, partly by watching the transformation of her husband's life, partly by the secret promptings of bodily weakness, which began to warn her that, young as she was, her death might not be distant. Who can wonder that at first the passionate language of self-abasement, which Pavillon and his own conscience might rightly place upon her husband's lips, would seem untrue upon her own? Whatever changes of feeling preceded her conversion she was faithful to her thought after as before it; and wife, widow, mother, is henceforward a Christian, according to the model of Alet, till she dies. In 1660 the Prince was appointed Governor of Languedoc, which gave him the desired opportunity of receiving and acting upon Pavillon's advice. With his wife he made a "retreat" at Alet in 1661, and again in 1662; laying aside for the time all state as the representative of royalty, and listening to the good Bishop's exhortations like any other layman of the province. A third time, in 1665, he came to Alet to

take counsel with Pavillon both as to his own religious condition and the affairs of his government. In the spring of 1666 he died.

It is noticeable how the Bishop of Alet, in common with the school of Jansenist theologians, to which he at this time unconsciously belonged, upheld, in dealing with such a penitent as the Prince de Conti, the claims of common, every-day morality. He would not suffer him to fly to a cloister and attempt to atone for profligacy by austerity. He withstood his desire to resign the government of Languedoc, and taught his penitent that a wise and righteous administration of public affairs, not a faithless abstinence from them, was the best sacrifice which a Prince could bring to God. He exacted from him hard and humiliating proofs of sincerity; to one gentleman of Bordeaux the Prince restored a great sum of money; of another he humbly asked pardon for having seduced his wife. When the Princess received her share of Mazarin's vast inheritance, she and her husband wished to employ the ill-gotten wealth in one splendid act of ecclesiastical munificence. There was a plan for building and endowing a costly church on the domains of Conti, another for founding a convent of Carmelite nuns, where the Princess might retire from time to time for religious meditation. But Pavillon also had his scheme. He held the Prince directly responsible for the wretchedness caused by the civil war, and asked of him an account of all the Church revenues which he had received and squandered. Now there was an opportunity of restitution. But he did not think promiscuous almsgiving enough, however lavish it might be; he proposed to the Prince to inquire through the province of Berri for the families which had suffered most in the war, and to cause restitution to be made from house to house. The Princess at first rebelled against a plan which was not only unattractive to the

imagination, but involved something of humiliation with its munificence. Presently she gave way; as one who yields rather to inner conviction than to the will of a director. Fontaine tells an anecdote of her widowhood, which illustrates her renunciation now. De Saçi had inculcated upon her the necessity of almsgiving, with reference to some occasion of great public misery, and she "having a pearl necklace of admirable beauty and very great value, as soon as she was informed of the wretchedness of the poor, deeming this string of pearls a superfluity, sacrificed it to help them. It is true that as she gave it, and looked at it for the last time, she heaved a little sigh, but her faith soon smothered it and remained victorious over nature."* Her weak and pliable husband, on the contrary, was incapable of choice when under the control of a stronger will than his own. He would go any lengths in virtue, as in vice; and for the same reason. An amusing story has been preserved to the effect that his boys, in reading the Old Testament with him, always passed over the story of the sacrifice of Isaac. "Our father is so good," they said, on being asked the reason, "that if God demanded it of him, he would do with us as Abraham did with Isaac. So we keep that from him."

I have already, in speaking of Lancelot's ineffectual attempts to educate these boys after the fashion of Port Royal, alluded to Madame de Conti's widowhood. From the very first a common religious interest had reconciled all differences between her husband and his sister; while after a time, when Madame de Longueville had fallen into the hands of Singlin, and the Bishop of Alet had discovered his unconscious affinity with the Jansenist party, they were all united upon the common ground of Port Royal. The two Princesses worked together for

* Fontaine, vol. iv. p. 267.

the Peace: Madame de Sévigné pleasantly called them "the mothers of the Church."* But Madame de Conti did not long survive the success of her efforts, and died, in the thirty-fifth year of her age, and the sixth of her widowhood, in 1672.†

Madame de Longueville had at first no point of contact with Port Royal; there was nothing Jansenist in the manner or the instruments of her conversion, and her history is one of religious aspiration, not of theological conviction. When once she was embarked in the cause of Port Royal, men said, not altogether unjustly, that she had found her right place in the Church, and from heroine of a political had become leader of an ecclesiastical Fronde. And, beyond doubt, it must have been a pleasant thing to that restless mind and eager will, to find once more a field of public action upon which they might lawfully exert themselves: she, who had formerly made treaties of peace and war with Spain, not unwillingly pleaded the cause of Port Royal with Pope and King. But it was not the desire of action, or any leaning to a rebellious theology, that brought her to Port Royal. She wanted a director, and could find none elsewhere. She came to Singlin, as Angélique Arnauld had formerly gone to St. Cyran, because she wished to submit herself to a stronger and wiser will than her own. The curés and monks who undertook her 'case' could not see into her heart, even when she opened it to them, and prescribed spiritual medicines, which left her ailing as before. At last, in 1661, many indications of circumstance pointed to Singlin as the confessor in whom she would find all she needed. But before we bring our heroine into the quiet port, where she is all our own, we must again enlarge

* Lett. xxix. March 13, 1671.

† Vies des Quatre Évêques, vol. i. p. 103, *et seq.* Besoigne, vol. iii. p. 36, *et seq.* Fontaine, vol. iii. p. 378. Ste Beuve, vol. iv. p. 422, *et seq.*

our gallery by adding to it the portraits of two friends, who formed the final link between her and the community henceforward to be inseparably connected with her name.

The first of these, Madlle. de Vertus, seems to have attached herself to Madame de Longueville before 1654, for we hear of her as helping her friend's reconciliation with her husband. From that time they lived together on terms of sisterly equality, till in 1671 Madlle. de Vertus made a final and complete retreat to Port Royal des Champs. She, too, was of an illustrious house, descending on the father's side from that royal family of Brittany which was united, in the marriage of Anne of Brittany with Louis XII., to the reigning dynasty of France. Her mother, a beautiful and profligate woman, was the daughter of La Varenne, who, once a cook, gained rank and infamous notoriety by ministering to the pleasures of Henri IV. Madlle. de Vertus was the younger sister of Madame de Longueville's old enemy, the Duchesse de Montbazon, but possessed neither her beauty nor her audacious wantonness. The family was poor; her other unmarried sisters had taken refuge in the convent; and she lived first with one great lady, and then with another, till she found in Madame de Longueville the friend of a life-time. Some unexplained mystery connects Madlle. de Vertus' name with that of La Rochefoucauld — could it be that the two friends had the same wrongs to deplore? Whatever may have been her sins, her repentance preceded that of Madame de Longueville; and she was, as Racine said in her epitaph, "the visible angel of whom God made use to aid this Princess to find the narrow way of salvation." Of the two, she had the more equable temper and the sounder judgment; and by the gentle constancy of her character often attracted those whom her friend repelled by some trace of the old pride and caprice. Throughout the whole of Madame de Longueville's attempt to allay

the troubles of Port Royal, Madlle. de Vertus stands by her side, and leaves her at last only to wear away a lingering old age in the arms of the beloved community.*

The other friend is one who asks from us a more minute and careful attempt at portraiture; for her connection with Port Royal was, in many ways, unlike that which bound others of her rank and sex to the community. Madeleine de Souvré was the daughter of Gilles de Souvré, Marquis de Courtenvaux, a soldier to whom Henri IV. gave a marshal's baton, and the charge of his son Louis XIII. She was born in 1599; and at the age of fifteeen married Philippe de Laval-Montmorençi, Marquis de Sablé, to whom she bore four children, none of whom have any connection with our story. Her husband died in 1640; about which time we first hear of her at Port Royal in company with Madame de Guéméné, and the future Queen of Poland.† The intercourse thus begun was never wholly intermitted; and about the year 1653, Madame de Sablé, a widow, whose only daughter had embraced the religious life, built for herself a house in the court-yard of Port Royal de Paris, having a communication of its own with the outside world, and a private door into the convent. Till her death, in 1678, this was her abode.

She had been beautiful in her youth, and had not wanted admirers, the most illustrious of whom was the unfortunate Henri de Montmorençi, brother of the Princesse de Condé. But Madame de Sablé held a chief place in the society of the Hôtel de Rambouillet; was indeed, according to her last biographer, "the type of the perfect *précieuse;*" and thought it no wrong that a wife and mother should receive such chaste and refined homage as M. de Montausier so long vainly offered to the "divine

* Cousin, Mad. de Sablé, pp. 228, 340, *et seq.* Stᵉ Beuve, vol. iv. p. 493. Besoigne, vol. iii. p. 131.

† Vol. i. p. 193.

Julie." Madame de Motteville, who knew her well, confirms this view of her relation to the Duc de Montmorençi, and adds, that she indignantly rejected his attentions when he began to raise his eyes to the Queen, "not being able to receive with pleasure such respect as she was compelled to share with the greatest Princess of the world." * She was, in truth, formed rather for friendship than for love; her heart was too cold, her affections too self-centred, to suffer the mastery of the warmer and less conscious passion. Her natural powers, which were good, had been cultivated by intercourse with the best society of the day; she loved to converse with men of letters, and they in turn asked and valued her opinion of their works. Voiture addressed many letters to her; La Rochefoucauld polished his "Maxims" with her help. But the greatest tribute to the solidity of her mind is, that Arnauld submitted to her approval the preliminary discourses of "The Port Royal Logic."

Madame de Sablé's relation to Port Royal is not easy to describe. If any religious fervour first brought her there, it was neither deep nor lasting; she is severed by a whole hemisphere from the spirit of the monastery while actually dwelling in its court-yard. A single letter addressed to her by Angélique Arnauld is still extant: it is dated March 11th, 1653, at the very beginning of her residence at Port Royal, and strikes, as it were, the key note of all her long subsequent correspondence with Agnès and Angélique de St. Jean Arnauld.† Angélique gently reproves her for her absurd fear of disease and death, and warns her that her windows, which look upon the convent garden, must not be open to strangers, whose approach might infringe upon strict conventual seclusion. From that time there is a constant interchange of notes between

* Mém. de Mad. de Motteville, p. 18.

† Lettres d'Angélique Arnauld, vol. ii. p. 292.

the house in the court-yard and the Abbess' parlour, full of complaint, and remonstrance, and patience, and reconciliation. Madame de Sablé bargains that she shall be kept accurately informed of all the sickness of the house; while at the same time she and her servants are always detecting some unreported illness, or magnifying a trifling ailment into a case of infectious disease. Thence fresh charges, and fresh explanations. The smell arising from the manufacture of tapers for the church offends her nostrils; and she will go, if some place sufficiently remote from her lodging cannot be found for the process. After she has been ten years at Port Royal, she finds out that her rooms have no morning sun upon them; and La Mère Agnès tries to console her with the idea that her face in the church is turned to the east, and so towards the Sun of righteousness. Then—for she is no longer young when she takes up her abode at Port Royal—she all at once loses her troublesome sense of smell; and many a querulous letter is written in the consciousness of this affliction to Agnès Arnauld, whose sober exhortations shine with a gleam of suppressed humour as she informs her correspondent that she herself has had no use of her nose for nearly fifty years, and does not find herself seriously worse for the privation. By and bye, the sense of taste begins to grow dull; and again there is a long lamentation, and much kindly attempt at comfort, not unmingled with rebuke. I doubt whether in the palmy days of Port Royal, Angélique Arnauld would have suffered so singular a connection to be prolonged; for she had borne impatiently the worldliness of greater ladies than Madame de Sablé. But in the time of trouble, the Marquise was in a thousand ways useful to the community; who, on their part, persuaded themselves that they were useful to her. If it was hard in the midst of a struggle of conscience, which seemed to involve their very existence, to

have to answer quietly her petty complaints and soothe her small jealousies, they at least knew that she was using for them all the resources of a masculine intellect, and a great social influence. So they bore with her to the last; and made her the confidante of their secretest councils. She remained at her house all through the reign of La Mère Eugénie, a friend in the enemy's camp. But when the true Port Royal was established once more in the house in the valley, she could not resolve to follow her friends. She was already seventy years of age; how should she leave Paris, and her pleasant literary coterie, and the physician in whom she put her trust, to bury herself in the country, and, above all, at a spot which was notoriously unhealthy? M. de Sévigné, a gentleman who stood in a similar relation to the convent, did not hesitate to transplant himself to Port Royal des Champs, and even had the rudeness to tell her that God had put a term to her life, which all her fears and precautions would not lengthen by a single day. But then he had been a rough soldier, with no great tincture of letters, and was not in any respect an example for a woman of mind and fashion like herself. So till her death in 1678, she remained at Port Royal de Paris, an apparent, though not a real link of union between the hostile houses. She lived with the new friends, much as she had lived with the old ones; and maintained with Port Royal des Champs the ancient commerce of jealous, querulous, and yet friendly letters.

The good sisters who have compiled the annals of Port Royal well knew that Madame de Sablé did not belong to them in the same way as Madame de St. Ange, or Madame de Longueville; and have consulted at once honesty and gratitude in abstaining from either praise or blame in their brief notices of her connection with the house. Other contemporaries were not so abstinent, and Madame de Sablé's peculiarities are preserved in a swarm of anec-

dotes. Her fear of infection was a subject of constant ridicule to her friends. Voiture*, who had attended the deathbed of a grandson of Madame de Rambouillet, addresses her thus:—"Know then that I who write to you do not write to you, for I have sent this letter twenty leagues from this place to be copied by a man whom I have never seen." Julie de Rambouillet, who had nursed Madame de Longueville through the small-pox, begins a letter to Madame de Sablé:—"Madlle. de Chalais will, if she pleases, read this letter to Madame la Marquise, standing to leeward of her;" and goes on to enumerate a host of half-absurd precautions which she promises to take if Madame de Sablé will consent to receive a visit from her.† On such a theme Tallemant lets his scandalous pen run wild; and if some of his stories are hard to be believed, the very fact of their currency shows what was Madame de Sablé's repute in the salons of Paris. "One day, when she went to call on the Maréchale de Guebriant, in the Fauxbourg St. Germain, she said:—'Ah, what a difficulty I am in! Which way shall I return? I saw upon the Pont Neuf a little boy who has lately had the small-pox! He is begging, and in driving him away my people might catch it; and there is something on the Pont Rouge that creaks.' At last, although she lived in the Fauxbourg St. Honoré, she went over the Pont Nôtre Dame." Again, she could not bear to speak either of her own or another's death. When her intimate friend, the Comtesse de Maure, was dying, she sent her companion, Madlle. de Chalais, to inquire how she was. "'But,' added she, 'take care not to tell me that she is dead.' Chalais got there as she expired. When she returned,—'Well, Chalais, is she as bad as she can be? does she not eat?' 'No,' answered Chalais. 'Nor speak?' 'Still less.' 'Nor hear?' 'Not at all.'

* Quoted by St^e^ Beuve, vol. iv. p. 449.

† Cousin, Mad. de Sablé, p. 17.

'She is dead then?' 'Madame,' answered Chalais, 'at least it is you who have said it, not I.'" But besides all this she was a distinguished epicure; prided herself upon the delicacy of her taste, and criticised cookery books with authority. Pisani, Madame de Rambouillet's son, said to her one day, in jest, "that she might try in vain to expel the devil from her house, for he had entrenched himself in her kitchen." Rapin comes to her for the receipt of a salad, and La Rochefoucauld exchanges maxims of morality for instructions in the art of making carrot soup. She teases the sisters of Port Royal with sending them presents of good things which their rule will not permit them to enjoy. When Agnès Arnauld is first imprisoned, the characteristic form assumed by Madame de Sablé's sympathy is a gift of new bread. The longer we dwell on this side of her character the harder it is to understand, why of all places in Paris where she might have built a house, she chose the court-yard of Port Royal.*

Madame de Sablé's acquaintance with Madame de Longueville dates at least from the days of the Hôtel de Rambouillet; for in two letters which she wrote to Julie de Rambouillet in answer to that which I have quoted, she shows herself jealous of her friend's superior courage in taking her place by the bedside of one whom they both loved. The Fronde was a great divider of friendships; and Madame de Sablé held fast to the party of Mazarin and the Queen. But about 1659 or 1660 the old intercourse was resumed, first by letter, and then, when Madame de Longueville came to live in Paris, by personal communication. Each was in possession of all the other's thoughts on the subject which soon began to occupy their whole attention; and

* Lettres d'Agnès Arnauld, nos. 398, 443, 445, 446, 447, 450, 454, 455, 494, 585, 593. Cousin, Mad. de Sablé, *passim.* St^e Beuve, vol. ii. p. 253; vol. iv. p. 447, *et seq.* Tallemant, vol. iv. p. 74, *et seq.* La Rochefoucauld, Lettres, pp. 230, 231.

notes were constantly exchanged between Port Royal de Paris and the Hôtel de Longueville. The friends agreed that all letters and papers should be burned as soon as read; Madame de Longueville religiously kept, Madame de Sablé deliberately broke the contract. Two hundred letters written by the former are part of the large collection of Madame de Sablé's correspondence, made and preserved by her physician, Valant. We read in some of them:—"Burn this note at once, I beg, as well as all that I write to you, and send me word that it is burned." "Do not be afraid to write clearly, for I burn your letters the moment I have read them." "Burn this, in God's name:" and so forth. Gratitude for the help given us by these letters, in tracing a critical part of Madame de Longueville's career, almost forbids us to characterise as it deserves, the faithlessness which not only omitted to fulfil such an engagement, but actually handed over the unreserved outpourings of friendship to be filed, and copied, and collated by an indifferent person.*

We do not hear of Madame de Longueville in connection with Port Royal till the spring of 1661. In a letter to Madame de Sablé, dated December 31st, 1660, she says, "All the Jansenism in the world would not have hindered me from coming to see you had I been longer or more at liberty in Paris;" implying in this phrase, that Madame de Sablé had feared lest her residence at Port Royal might prove a barrier to intercourse with her friend. But not long after this, we find her visiting the death-bed of Angélique Arnauld, and asking for an interview with Singlin, who, at that time, in fear of a *lettre-de-cachet*, had concealed himself in a house in the suburbs of Paris, of which Madame Vitart was the reputed tenant. Madlle. de Vertus was the instrument of communication with

* Cousin, Mad. de Sablé, p. 174.

Madame de Sablé and Port Royal. "I beg of you," she writes, "to send your friend here to-morrow. He must come in a chair and send back his porters; I will give him mine to take him wherever he pleases. He will be put in a room where no one will see him. A maid-servant will wait upon him at the door of the apartment. He will not be asked who he is. Thus, my good Madame, he need not fear any difficulty. I only wish to know the precise time in order to get rid of any strangers who may happen to be with me. If he comes in a chair, let it go straight into the court-yard. I greatly desire the accomplishment of this, for the poor woman has no rest. If I could see her in good hands, I assure you it would give me great joy." But Singlin, as usual, hesitated. He had looked upon his enforced concealment as a token that God wished him to abandon the direction of consciences, and to live the life of a simple penitent. At last, reading one day the account of our Lord's conversation with the Samaritan woman, at a time when the jealousy of the Pharisees had compelled him to quit Judea, he saw the analogy with his own case and the duty now asked of him, and yielded. Nevertheless many precautions were necessary. He visited the Hôtel de Longueville, under the name of M. de Martigny. He changed his cassock for a physician's cloak and wig: and was cautiously introduced, as we have seen, into the presence of his penitent. He could not refrain from a smile, says Fontaine, to see himself thus disguised. "*Manus quidem, manus sunt Esaü.* The hands are the hands of Esau: but I must try, that beneath these clothes which hide my real self, the voice shall be always the voice of Jacob." *

Soon Madame de Longueville had found in Singlin the

* Fontaine, vol. iii. p. 317, *et seq.* Cousin, Mad. de Sablé, pp. 181, 232. Lett. de la Mère Angélique, vol. iii. p. 529.

director for whom she had so long waited. It is not unreasonable to suppose that the great Frondeuse felt an attraction towards a form of doctrine which was loudly accused of heresy, and a community which seemed to hang upon the verge of schism. But, at the same time, she was earnestly seeking for peace on the path of self-mortification, and as yet had not found it. Her directors had wearied her with impositions of penance, but had never touched the malady which was the true cause of her unrest. In a general confession which, at Singlin's desire, she wrote in November 1661, she reveals a character which it is not difficult to reconcile with much that the memoir writers, and especially De Retz and Madame de Nemours, have recorded of her. Pride, self-love, a desire to excel, a wish to hold the foremost place in men's thoughts and words, are the varying names of a principle of action which had governed her life with fatal power. It assumed a comparatively harmless form in the motives which bade her shine at the Hôtel de Rambouillet; it smoothed the way to her *liaison* with La Rochefoucauld, and plunged her into the troubles of the Fronde; it exaggerated to her the bitterness of a return to her husband's hearth, and urged her to involve Condé in civil war; even now she is not sure that it is not the secret cause of the docility with which she submits herself to Singlin's direction, and, transformed into an angel of light, guides her pen in the very record of her sins. In the management of so difficult a penitent, Singlin displayed all the tact and good sense which seem to have rarely failed the confessors of Port Royal in their dealing with wounded consciences. He relieved her at once from all extraordinary obligations of austerity, except such as she chose voluntarily to assume. He insisted upon her full and ungrudging performance of the duties of a wife and mother, as the best penance. He would not suffer her to contemplate the idea

of retirement to a monastery. Seeing that the only safety for a mind so fertile in subtleties, a spirit so mobile to every wind of caprice, lay in the practical duties of religion, he placed before her the necessity of repairing the wretchedness caused by the wars of the Fronde, and engaged her sympathies in the cause of Port Royal. He associated with her in all pious exercises and labours Madlle. de Vertus, as a friend, whose calmer and more equable nature would help to soothe her restlessness. When, in 1664, Singlin died, his place was assumed by De Saçi, who continued the work till his arrest in 1666. Long before this time, Madame de Longueville had become entirely devoted to the cause of Port Royal; and the friends and confessors of the community were hers also.*

The seven years, from 1661 to 1668, which intervened between Madame de Longueville's first visit to Port Royal and the Peace of the Church, were those of the hardest struggle against the Formulary. I have already narrated the fortunes and the issue of the fight; a few words will complete all that it is necessary to add as to Madame de Longueville's part in it. At first we are told, and can easily believe, that Madame de Sablé advocated a prompt and unconditional signature; and that her friend, not yet fully imbued with the spirit of the community, used her influence in the same direction. But as the contest grew hotter, and on the side of Port Royal apparently more hopeless, all her sympathies went with the sisterhood in their stubborn resistance to ecclesiastical tyranny. M. de Longueville died in 1663; and his widow thenceforward took up her permanent residence in Paris, where her house became the rallying point of Jansenism. For five years she afforded an asylum in the Hôtel de Longueville, which no

* Fontaine, vol. iii. p. 322, *et seq.* St^e Beuve, vol. iv. p. 516, *et seq.* St^e Beuve, Portraits de Femmes, p. 300, *et seq.*

police ventured to search, to Arnauld and Nicole. There, too, were held the conferences which finally settled the form of that version of the New Testament, which usually goes under the name of De Saçi. Thither gathered themselves all who dared to sympathise with the imprisoned sisterhood, and there were made the first efforts to procure an armistice. It would be untrue to say that the Peace of the Church was wholly due to Madame de Longueville; a concurrence of circumstances, with which she had nothing to do, had prepared the way, and made it possible, at the moment when Clement IX. was elevated to the Papal chair. But to her belongs the merit of having seen and seized upon the favourable instant: of judiciously and unsparingly employing in the work of reconciliation all the means at her disposal. She induced Gondrin, Archbishop of Sens, to take up the cause of the Four Bishops. She set Condé to work upon the King. She herself wrote to the Pope and his cardinal-secretary. She put in motion every engine of private or public influence which Port Royal could command. She smoothed down the suspicious conscientiousness of her friends, as well as the angry prejudices of their opponents. And at last in 1668 she had the satisfaction of seeing Arnauld welcomed by the Nuncio, and graciously received by the King; in 1669, the still greater pleasure of knowing that La Mère Agnès and her nuns were released from their long confinement. To have employed in negotiating the peace of the Gallican Church the same powers which she had once misused to let loose upon her country the miseries of war, must have been a grateful salve to her wounded and unquiet conscience. She was spared the pain of seeing her work undone; the peace lasted no longer than her life.*

* Ste Beuve, vol. iv. p. 259, *et seq.* Cousin, Mad. de Sablé, p. 235, *et seq.* Besoigne, vol ii. p. 395, *et seq.*

While following the fortunes of Madame de Longueville, we have altogether lost sight of La Rochefoucauld. They parted, as we have seen, before the end of the Princes' war, and do not appear ever to have met again. But during the years which immediately followed Madame de Longueville's connection with Port Royal, Madame de Sablé was the intimate friend of both, and is thus the means of once more bringing La Rochefoucauld within reach of our story. For his famous "Maxims" received their epigrammatic polish at her house in the court yard of Port Royal, and obtained, as a sort of worldly version of the Augustinian doctrine of human nature, the applause of more than one Jansenist theologian.

At the battle of the Porte St. Antoine, La Rochefoucauld received a wound, which for a while deprived him of sight. He had seen for some time that the Fronde was a losing game, and now blind, gouty, disappointed, cynical, threw up the cards, and buried himself and his ailments in the country. Time and rest restored his eyesight; others, as deeply implicated in the Fronde as himself, gradually regained the royal favour; and little by little the old intriguer ventured to show himself once more, and to plot for his son's advancement at court, as eagerly as he had once plotted for his own. But he never again took a prominent part in public affairs. Even if the king's rooted distrust of all those who had troubled his minority could have been eradicated, his reign offered no scope for La Rochefoucauld's peculiar powers. Louis wanted brilliant generals and able administrators, and the veteran Frondeur was neither of these. He was made to swim in troubled waters; to grasp his own or his party's advantage in the lawless shock of public and private interests; to weave an endless web of petty intrigue; to provide for the necessities of the moment by new and ever-changing combinations; — not to govern a peaceful kingdom in obedience to a regal will, or

to concentrate all its resources in one strong blow against a foreign enemy. So he became the polished man of society, whose talk was a model of brilliant conversation, and whose literary reputation was at least as great as became a gentleman of distinguished birth and station. He had no talent for public speaking; he stammered and turned pale if he had to address five or six persons at once; and refused to be of the French Academy for fear of the harangue which he must have made at his entrance. But in a drawing-room he was without a rival; and strange as it may seem to those who have read our story, the drawing room which he most affected, was that in the court yard of Port Royal.

He had occupied himself, during his period of retirement, in the composition of memoirs of his own time; which still remain to guide, and at the same time perplex, the historian in his attempt to narrate the true tale of the Fronde. As regards the author himself, they are artfully apologetic; while bearing with a heavy hand upon the sins and weaknesses of friend and foe. Perhaps the most truthful narrative would have been displeasing to the actors in that wild tragicomedy. Who could write the history of the struggle without staining the fair fame of the combatants? However this may be, La Rochefoucauld was greeted with a storm of indignation, when, in 1662, his "Memoirs" were published at Cologne. St. Simon tells us how his father was so indignant with the misrepresentation of his conduct at a particular emergency, that he went to the publisher's shop in Paris, and wrote in every copy of the edition, opposite to the passage of which he complained, "The author has lied." Condé had many reasons of anger, and was loud in the expression of it: Madame de Longueville, who had not fewer, conquered her indignation and was silent. La Rochefoucauld had recourse to the usual method of defence in such cases. He had never intended to publish his memoirs; the copy of the manuscript which had got into

the printer's hands, had been stolen from him. Two-thirds of the book was a shameless forgery; the other third was so garbled and falsified as utterly to misrepresent his meaning. He stated these facts publicly, adding a special apology to Condé and his sister. Meanwhile the mischief was beyond redemption, for the book rapidly passed through many editions, while the disavowal remained comparatively unknown. It is now impossible to arrive with absolute certainty at the facts of the case; for no copy of the memoirs in La Rochefoucauld's autograph is known to exist. But of the many extant manuscripts no one bears out his statement. There is little doubt, that the book as originally published, was substantially from his pen; that if he was not accessory to its issue, he had given the manuscript a wide circulation; and that he attempted to shield himself from the consequences by a deliberate falsehood.

The affront which Madame de Longueville bore in silence was very gross. It is true that the passage* describing the cool calculation of interest, which had first led La Rochefoucauld to seek her love, is not to be found in the earliest edition of the "Memoirs." But at the very first mention of her name, he had said of her†, "that her fine qualities were less brilliant, on account of a failing, which had never before been seen in a princess of such merit; which is, that so far from giving the law to those who paid her a special adoration, she so completely transformed herself into their sentiments, as no longer to have any opinions of her own." And besides this ungenerous exposure of a gracious womanly weakness, which alone had enabled him to play a great part in the politics of the Fronde, and had borne no harvest to her, but a bitter shame and sorrow, he narrated with cool triumph the intrigue by which he had detached her from Condé, and at once avenged himself and

* Ante, p. 262. † Memoirs, p. 418.

Madame de Chatillon for the smiles which she had bestowed upon the Duc de Nemours. But this is not quite all. There is a theory, which, taking its rise from La Rochefoucauld himself, makes him and Madame de Longueville exchange parts in this drama of passion and treachery. She lured his loving, trusting nature into politics; he fought and plotted only to secure her affection; and retired from the scene with heart half-broken by her unfaithfulness. But Madame de Sablé's portfolios have supplied a complete refutation of this plausible hypothesis. Madame de Longueville, silent of her wrongs to the world, had, it appears, poured forth her indignation to her friend, who, in turn, communicated it to La Rochefoucauld. His answer contains not a word of apology, or of regret. He takes Madame de Longueville's indignation as a sign that she has ceased to hate him. Is it piety, or weariness, or a conviction that he was not so much in the wrong as she had thought, which has produced this change? He begs Madame de Sablé, who is so well acquainted with all the windings of the heart, to furnish him with the means of deciding this psychological problem. If any warmth of disinterested love, of manly tenderness, had ever lingered about that cold heart, he would have suffered the unwritten secret of Madame de Longueville's weakness to die with him. Give him the benefit of every doubt, and suppose that he had not wilfully published it to the world, he should at least have heard in respectful silence, expostulations and complaints, which it was too late for words to soothe. To lift him to a higher pinnacle of infamy, it needed only that he should seek to anatomise the heart which he had so cruelly wounded, and attempt to make a surgical study of its wild, despairing palpitations.*

* Cousin, Mad. de Sablé, p. 203, *et seq.* Mém. de St^e^ Simon, vol. i. p. 121.

The coterie which met at Madame de Sablé's, and of which La Rochefoucauld was the most distinguished member, was characterised by a fondness for maxims, sentences, aphorisms. Many books of maxims were the production of its members: Madame de Sablé herself published one; a series of "Thoughts" have been discovered among Domat's papers; and Pascal, who, like all the heads of his party, sometimes visited the witty Marquise, may have owed to the discussions of her drawing-room the aphoristic form of many of his fragments. But La Rochefoucauld's "Maxims," first published in 1665, is the representative book of its class, not only in French, but in European literature. We are able, in the papers which M. Cousin has brought to light, to trace the growth of this celebrated volume with curious and interesting minuteness. Every aphorism, as it was produced, was sent to Madame de Sablé for correction and approval. La Rochefoucauld's letters to the lady are full of the maxims and of the culinary receipts which he asks in return. "You know," he says in one place*, "with what good faith I deal with you, and that maxims are maxims only after you have approved them." They formed the subject of conversation among the wits and ladies who assembled in her salon; if he was not himself present, remark and criticism were faithfully reported to him. As the series drew near its completion Madame de Sablé undertook to collect more formal and deliberate opinions. She sent the manuscript, always without the name of any author, to many of her friends, whose criticisms, either from their literary repute or their acquaintance with the world, might be worth having. The answers, some with, some without signatures, have now emerged into daylight; and are singularly interesting and significant to those who are sufficiently well acquainted

* Œuvres, p. 218.

with the social history of the period to form distinct conceptions of the writers. One fact, at least, is worth recording for the general reader, that almost all the admirers of the "Maxims" are of the male sex.

It is characteristic of La Rochefoucauld that, though the first edition of the "Maxims" was prepared for publication with great care, though he never disavowed the work, and though he superintended during his lifetime the issue of four other corrected and augmented editions, the book, like the "Memoirs," was first published in Holland under circumstances of similar suspicion. The genuine edition was at once brought out in Paris, with an elaborate preface by Segrais, who ventured to say, "It is easy to perceive that this work was not destined to see the light. It is the production of a person of quality, who has written it only for himself, and who does not aspire to the glory of being an author." Meanwhile, the "person of quality" set himself, in the most approved fashion of modern days, to procure a favourable review of the book which "he had written only for himself." The "Journal des Savants," the most ancient of European reviews, came into existence in 1665, the very year in which the "Maxims" were published. At La Rochefoucauld's request, Madame de Sablé, who was in one sense half the author of the book, wrote an article for insertion in the Journal. It was, as we may suppose, sufficiently favourable, yet not favourable enough for the modern apostle of self-love. Before it was printed he passed his pen through every word that could be supposed "to hint a fault or hesitate dislike." A malicious fate has preserved the original draught of the article, which, side by side with the amended form extracted from the "Journal des Savants," may be read in M. Cousin's pages. It is amusing to find the devices, which are supposed to characterise a degenerate age of

critical literature, practised in the first volume of the first review.

It hardly comes within the scope of my purpose to attempt to criticise this celebrated work in detail. Its general aim is well known. It consists of a series of moral aphorisms, nearly all of which are directed to prove that the so-called virtuous impulses of the heart are only as many various forms of self-love. It would be impossible to deny that, in executing this scheme, La Rochefoucauld displays a wonderful ingenuity of speculation, and a minute if narrow acquaintance with human character. There is often no escape from the meshes of the artful statement, if the reader trusts to reason to unloose the knots; if he would be extricated, he must invoke the sharp sword of his own moral impulse to cut them. When he is neither perplexed nor convinced, he is forced to admire the studied symmetry of the thought, the simple perfection of the phrase. And yet the chief impression made on any who are at all accustomed to moral speculations, is of the author's inadequate knowledge of the human nature which he professes to anatomise and to describe. Whom has he known, we ask, with whom has he lived, that he should paint mankind in such sombre colours? The mystery is only half solved when we recollect the wild and careless selfishness of the Fronde. Madame de Gueméné, one of the lady critics to whom the manuscript was sent, hit the blot, when, not knowing of whom she spoke, she wrote to Madame de Sablé, "What I have seen of the book appears to me to be based rather upon the author's humour, than upon truth; for the reason why he does not believe in disinterested liberality or pity is, that he judges of all the world by himself." We have only to set the "Memoirs" and the "Maxims" side by side, to see that each is the mirror of the other.

La Rochefoucauld's connection with Madame de Sablé had nothing to do with her Jansenism, and he never betrays any interest in the great debate which divided the Church. Yet such of the doctors of Port Royal, as had time and thought in 1665 to spare from their own troubles, welcomed and approved his book, for its doctrine, so far as it went, was entirely accordant with their own. It was indeed more valuable than a theological, because it was an independent testimony to the Augustinian theory of human nature: a nobleman, who had borne his part in all the state affairs of his day; had seen much of the world, and of mankind; and moreover, who cared nothing for any theological consequences of his doctrine, had come to precisely the same conclusions as the great Latin Father. But La Rochefoucauld's maxims are Jansenism made hideous. He does not say worse things of human nature than Pascal; but while with the latter's mind, the thought of the state of innocence and the state of redemption is always present, La Rochefoucauld owns the existence of neither. His attention is all upon the morbid anatomy of the corpse upon the dissecting table; he neither remembers the days of life and vigour, nor looks forward to the moment of resurrection. The difference between him and Pascal leaves its traces even upon their style. Each is clear, simple, epigrammatic; each has attained the secret of that highest art which conceals itself. But there is a peculiarity about Pascal's speech which is altogether wanting to La Rochefoucauld; he utters himself like a man with a heart and a conscience; he takes the reader into his confidence and reveals to him the objects of his love, and hate, and belief. La Rochefoucauld is cold, calm, impersonal in a rare degree; the first sentence opens the way into his mind, as far as he designs that the reader should penetrate; all the rest only repeat and strengthen its impression; and even when we are compelled to agree with the moralist, we learn to fear and dislike the

man. His epigrams have all the glitter of polished steel, and are as hard, and sharp, and cold.*

The troubles of Port Royal were not Madame de Longueville's only cause of anxiety in the latter years of her life: her letters to Madame de Sablé tell the story of a long series of domestic distresses and struggles. Of her four children, two daughters died in childhood. Her eldest son, Charles d'Orleans, Comte de Dunois, was seventeen when his father died; the second, Charles Paris, Comte de St. Paul, who had been born at the Hôtel de Ville in the first excitement of the Fronde, three years younger. M. de Longueville, in opposition to his wife's wishes, had entrusted the general superintendence of his sons' education to the well known Jesuit Père Bouhours; she, on the other hand, had given the place of preceptor to the Comte de St. Paul to the Abbé d'Ailly, a Jansenist friend of Madame de Sablé, who ill deserved the trust reposed in him, and endeavoured to win the pupil's affections at the cost of unfaithfulness to the parent's wishes. The contrast between the two boys was startling and painful. The eldest, the heir to the Dukedom of Longueville, was deformed in person, and almost imbecile in mind; the younger bright, beautiful, accomplished, the idol of all hearts. M. de Longueville had given up in despair the idea of making the Comte de Dunois a statesman and a soldier, and, with the intention of transferring the title and estates to his brother, had compelled him to enter the Society of Jesus as a novice. But he was not yet irrevocably bound to the service of the Church, when in 1663 his father died. He had not sufficient intellect to feel any vocation for the Church; even the Jesuits manifested some reluctance to receive him; and he broke loose from the restraints which had been imposed upon him to take refuge with his mother.

* Cousin, Mad. de Sablé, chap. ii. p. 64, *et seq.*

Her situation was painfully embarrassing. Condé, with all the friends on whose judgment she was accustomed to rely, took the part of the Comte de St. Paul. They drew back in disgust from the thought that the great house of Longueville should be represented to the world by the imbecile brother, while so worthy an heir of its honours stood "near the throne." They entreated Madame de Longueville, who had assumed the entire administration of the family affairs, to carry her husband's intention into effect, and to send back her eldest son to the seminary. But she had more than one reason for hesitation, which they could only imperfectly understand. Her new conceptions of ecclesiastical morality forbade her to force into the Church one who was scandalously unfit for it; her Jansenism rebelled against suffering either of her children to become a Jesuit. For the sake of both her sons, she was determined that full justice should be done to the elder. No sophistry could rob him of the rights of primogeniture; if, when he was twenty-five years of age, he were disposed to make a voluntary resignation of his claims to the Comte de St. Paul, well and good; otherwise she would never consent to his degradation. She may have had a secret consciousness that the Comte de Dunois was the rightful heir to his father's honours, in a way which his brother never could be. The latter had been born in the first warmth of her affection for La Rochefoucauld, and in character resembled rather the brilliant and versatile Marsillac of those days, than the somewhat cold, and slow, and stately Longueville. Nor was this a case of no infrequent occurrence, in which a mother's love is most powerfully drawn out towards the child who needs it most. Justice bade her contend for her elder, but love pleaded for her younger son. She wrote to Condé, who eagerly pressed upon her the claims of the Comte de St. Paul: "Remember, in giving me your advice, not to

look so exclusively on one side, as to pay no regard at all to the other. If we owe more friendship to one, we owe justice to the other; we owe it to ourselves in God's sight, and even to our own reputation in the conduct of our family. So remember that my eldest son is my son, however he is formed; and that I have, therefore, my duties towards him, which I am bound in conscience and honour to fulfil; and remember, besides, that even should I not fulfil them, I should not attain my ends, for, being eighteen years and a half old, he would do everything in spite of me, and cause me a thousand griefs by his hatred, and by the connections which he would, sooner or later, form, without any possibility of preventing him, if he did not find in me a mother's heart, that is to say, compassion, forbearance with his faults, and above all, at least, justice. You may answer to all this that, even if I should behave to him thus, you believe him to be so deformed in mind, as almost certainly to act in the same way. It may be so; but besides that it may also not be so, and that he is not the first who has been changed, whether by the grace of God or by age, I make it a maxim to do my duty to others absolutely without hope of recompence, in the first place for love of my duty, and then because, when I have done all that I am convinced I ought to do for prudence sake, I can much more easily find consolation for ill-success." So she kept the unfortunate young man with her, doing her best to form his mind and character; making no plans, but leaving the future to determine itself. Her efforts were all in vain. Impatient of restraint, he secretly left her house and fled to Rome, where, in 1669, he took orders under the name of the Abbé d'Orleans.

The way was then clear for the Comte de St. Paul, who legally became Duc de Longueville and Prince of Neufchâtel. But the mother's troubles were only transferred from one son to the other. Formed, in body and mind,

to succeed in society,—at once spoiled by injudicious teachers, and repelled by the austerities of his mother's life,—placed, from the first, in an unnatural position towards a brother whom he could neither respect nor love,—he plunged eagerly into the gay and dissipated life which seemed so naturally to open before him. The men admired, the women loved him; Condé saw renewed in him the brilliant promise of his own youth; a murmur of mixed praise and expectation seemed to follow him whereever he went; only his mother secretly lamented a life which she could not approve, and which made him every day less courteous and less affectionate to herself. At last, upon his brother's final entry into the church, she gave up the immense ecclesiastical revenues, which had formerly been settled upon the Comte de St. Paul, and attempted to negotiate his marriage. It is said that she proposed him as a bridegroom to Mademoiselle, a proceeding which has an air of policy ill-accordant with Madame de Longueville's single-minded desire for her son's welfare; for the bride, though the richest heiress in Europe, was at least forty years of age, and had covered herself with ridicule by her unlucky amour with Lauzun. Upon the failure of this negotiation, she turned her attention to the vacant throne of Poland. The Polish Diet had desired to make Condé their King; but he had loyally yielded to the wish of Louis XIV. that he should not deprive his country, in her hour of need, of the advantage of his military genius. Not unnaturally the Poles turned to M. de Longueville, Condé's favourite nephew, who in more than one campaign had given proofs of an adventurous bravery. The King consented, the Diet proceeded to election; when, in 1672, the French army, under Condé, prepared to pass the Rhine and to invade Holland. The passage, which historians and poets alike vaunted as a miracle of military skill, was accomplished

with little loss. But Condé was wounded, and the Duc de Longueville killed upon the field. Immediately after the battle, was announced the arrival of the Polish envoys, who came to salute their king, and to carry him back in triumph to Dantzic. In a miserable hut by the river they found Condé, careless of his hurt in the consciousness of his own and the thought of his sister's grief; and by his side, lying beneath a soldier's cloak, all that was left of the last Duc de Longueville.

To describe the effect of such a blow as this upon the poor mother's already distracted heart, we will have recourse to Madame de Sévigné's classic words. She writes to her daughter*, "Madlle. de Vertus had returned two days before to Port Royal, where she almost always is: they went to fetch her, with M. Arnauld, to tell this terrible news. Madlle. de Vertus had only to show herself; this hasty return was itself ominous of ill. In fact, as soon as she appeared; 'Ah! Mademoiselle, how is my brother?' Her thought did not venture further. 'Madame, he is better of his wound: there has been a battle.' 'And my son?' They answered nothing. 'Ah! Mademoiselle, my son, my dear child, answer me, is he dead?' 'Madame, I have no words wherewith to answer you.' 'Ah! my dear son! is he dead upon the field? has he not had a single moment? Ah! my God, what a sacrifice!'—and with that she falls upon her bed, and all that the most lively grief can do both by convulsions, and faintings, and a mortal silence, and strangled cries, and bitter tears, and appeals to heaven, and tender and pitiful complaints—she has experienced all. She sees some persons, she takes nourishment, because it is God's will; she has no sleep; her health, already very bad, is visibly altered for the worse; and for myself I hope that she may die, for I do not understand

* June 20th, 1672.

how she can survive such a loss." Presently she began to find some comfort in the sorrow and sympathy, which were manifested on every side. But as her deepest grief had been in the thought that her son's sudden death had not left a moment for repentance, her best consolation was the discovery, that before he had set out on the campaign, he had seriously applied himself to religious exercises, and after due penance, had received absolution. It is not needful to inquire closely into the depth and probable permanence of the young duke's new impressions; it is enough that they were effectual to soothe a sacred grief into resignation. A few weeks after his death, Madame de Longueville was able to write to M. de Barcos *: "I suppose that you know, that he was about to become King of Poland. If God, in depriving him of life, and the hope of a crown, has had mercy upon him, He has given far more than He has taken away. And so I have only to adore His dealing both with my son, and with myself; it is just, like all that proceeds from the ordinance of His providence. I beg you to ask of Him for me an entire adherence to all His will, and an inner separation from the world, corresponding to that which he is bringing to pass in my external circumstances, by the ruin of my family. Your charity will not refuse me this favour."

La Rochefoucauld also had suffered by that fatal passage of the Rhine. The Prince de Marsillac had been severely wounded, a younger son killed. Madame de Sévigné writing to her daughter of his grief†, interrupts herself, "Alas! I am not telling the truth; between ourselves, my daughter, he has not felt the loss of the Chevalier, and he is inconsolable for him, whom all the world regrets." And again in the letter which I have already quoted: "There is one man in the world who is little less grieved; I have

* V. Cousin. Mad. de Sablé. p. 298. † June 24th, 1672.

it in my head that if they had met one another quite alone in those first moments, all other feelings would have given place to cries and tears, which they would have redoubled with all their hearts; it is a vision." It could hardly have been as Madame de Sévigné fancies, for the very qualities which made La Rochefoucauld delight in the Comte de St. Paul, were those which gave rise to his mother's most anxious solicitude. A great gulf stretched between them, which not even the sense of a common loss like this could fill up. For the last time they felt the touch of the same grief; perhaps for the last time lived again in memory through the old days; and went on their way to meet, even in feeling, no more. The name associated with La Rochefoucauld's declining years is that of Madame de la Fayette; the love which once pretended to such passion and constancy, had passed away like a morning mist before the sun, and left as little trace behind.

After the death of her son, Madame de Longueville prepared for a final retirement from the world. She quitted her house in Paris; and resided alternately at the Carmelite Convent which had appeared so desirable to her girlish wishes, and at a house which she had built near the gate of Port Royal des Champs. It was still not possible that she should altogether loosen her hold upon secular affairs. She was compelled to make occasional brief visits to Normandy, and became involved in a long lawsuit with her step-daughter about the sovereignty of Neufchâtel. The interests of Port Royal, too, required that she should maintain some intercourse with the court; in these years the Jansenists were familiarly known as "the friends of Madame de Longueville." Louis XIV. had learned to respect her evident sincerity; and Condé, once more the devoted brother of their youthful days, served, without sharing her predilections. Little by little, a harsher austerity fastened itself upon her life: the Carmelite nuns pointed

with pride to the bare boards upon which their princess slept; and an accident once revealed the fact that she wore an iron girdle. Like Conti she made enormous pecuniary sacrifices to repair the wrongs inflicted by the war of the Fronde; in one year 4000 persons who lived upon her alms, and the release of 900 prisoners for debt, testified to her prodigal munificence. But beyond this, there is nothing to tell of the last seven years of her life. Their seclusion was almost as complete as if she had indeed taken the veil in one of her beloved retreats. But though necessarily pensive, and almost monotonous, her retirement cannot have been altogether sad, as she reflected that the returning peace and prosperity of Port Royal were in great part the effect of her labours; and that she had been suffered to continue a Christian work, which holier hands and purer hearts than hers had begun.

She died on the 15th of April, 1679, in her sixtieth year. She had long before directed in her will, that her body should be buried in which ever of her monastic homes she might chance to die; but that her heart should be deposited in the other. So she lay with her mother in the Carmelite Convent; and her heart was affectionately received and solemnly interred at Port Royal des Champs; where a brief epitaph, gently alluding to the time of her worldliness, records in appropriate phrase of commendation her charity, her selfdenial, her forgivingness, her repentance, and her hearty love for God and the Church. In 1692, Madlle. de Vertus, seventy-five years of age, and worn out with eleven years' confinement to her bed, went to her rest, and was buried in the cemetery of the convent, among the nuns whom she had striven to resemble in spirit, and as far as possible in mode of life.

I will not attempt the task of forming a general estimate of Madame de Longueville's character. So large a power of fascination still lingers about it, that the biographer is

tempted to apologise, when he should weigh, and judge, and perhaps condemn. All comprehensive judgments of character are difficult; but to hold the balance between sin and repentance is not given to any human hand. There is only One who knows whether the stain upon a life has been wholly washed away by tears. Madame de Longueville herself, when once publicly and grossly insulted by an officer, who approached her with some request, which she was unable to grant, protected her cowardly assailant from the summary vengeance which her servants were about to take. "Stop," she cried, "do not touch him, let him say what he will, I have deserved much worse things." We will leave the matter there.*

* Villefore, vol. ii. book vi. p. 121, *et seq.* Cousin, Mad. de Sablé, chap. v. p. 259, *et seq.* Nécrologe, p. 156.

V.

RACINE.

By the side of Pascal, the greatest writer of French prose, I have now to erect the effigy of Racine, the first of French poets. Each was Port Royalist at heart; each was withdrawn by Port Royal from labours to which the applause of men promised an immortality of fame; each died in peace with the community. But while Pascal adopted the Jansenist theory of religion in years of maturity, and never after swerving in his allegiance, devoted to its development and defence his best powers, Racine, a pupil at Les Granges, rebelled against all the influence of early training, won his reputation by works which Port Royal absolutely denounced as sinful, shook a fierce lance of controversy in the face of his old teachers, and, only after many years wandering, repented and returned, to defend the community by pen and voice, to chronicle its glories and misfortunes, and to order his bones to be laid at last in the cloister which his studious feet had often paced in youth. Were the whole interest of Racine's life centred in his works and the questions of literary history which arise out of them, it would need but a brief narrative in this place; though even then we might trace the direct influence of Port Royal in the production of the masterpiece of French tragedy, the "Athalie." But we fortunately possess materials for his biography, which prove that the man demands our love, almost as much as the poet our

admiration. It is seldom that we are able to penetrate behind the mask of genius, and see — as in the case of Racine — an honest, kindly human countenance, smiling or sighing beneath. When, newly emancipated from the restraints of Port Royal, he pours out his heart to his young friends and rivals in the field of literature, or in middle age exchanges thought and feeling with his life-long friend Boileau, or, towards the last, sends homely news of Babet and Nannette to his son in Holland; his letters are alike frank, simple, innocent. I should willingly rest the lovableness of his character on his friendship with Boileau, one who, like St. Simon afterwards, stands out from the courtiers of Le Grand Monarque, as an honest man—a satirist, whose satires were the natural voice of his conscience. It lasted for thirty-five years without a cloud, and was interrupted only at the death-bed of Racine. Boileau has many claims of his own to a place in the annals of Port Royal; but even were it not so, I should, like Louis Racine, the son and biographer of the poet, find it hard to separate those who were so associated in fame and friendship. The works of these two great poets I must leave, with brief remark, to the literary critic; while I make a rough and ineffectual attempt to portray the men.*

The Racines were a respectable family long settled at Ferté Milon, a little town of Valois, about fifty miles from Paris. Here Jean Racine, who died in 1593, was receiver of the domain and duchy of Valois. His son, also Jean Racine, the poet's grandfather, was comptroller of the salt depôt in the same place, and married Marie Desmoulins, who had two sisters, nuns in Port Royal des Champs. He was the father of two children, Agnes, who

* The following facts, when not specially acknowledged, are taken from the 'Vie de Jean Racine,' by his son, Louis Racine. I refer to Racine's letters, as they are found in Didot's edition of his works, 1 vol. 8vo. 1854.

afterwards became Abbess of Port Royal, and again, a Jean, who, with his father's name, inherited his office. Two children had been born to him, the poet and a sister, when, in 1643, he died. His wife was already dead, and the little ones were transferred to the care of their maternal grandfather, Pierre Sconin.

Jean Racine was born on the 21st of December, 1639, and consequently had not reached his fourth year when thus orphaned. How or where his childish years were passed we are not informed. His father's mother, now a widow, lived with his grandfather Sconin, but his single recollection of these days seems to hint at something like neglect. His first place of education, the College of Beauvais, was doubtless indicated by the close alliance of his kindred with Port Royal. Two sisters of his grandmother were nuns in that house; and perhaps in consequence of this, the son of his uncle and aunt Vitart had been one of Lancelot's and Le Maître's earliest pupils. At the end of 1638, a year before Racine's birth, the teachers, driven from their abode by the imprisonment of St. Cyran, had sought a temporary refuge at the scholar's home, at Ferté Milon. The result was the still closer union of the whole family with the suspected community. When, at the end of 1639, the solitaries ventured to return to the deserted valley, M. Vitart accompanied them, and undertook the management of the conventual revenues. In 1650, Madame Desmoulins followed him, and with her sisters, ended her days in the monastery. M. Vitart died in 1641 or 1642, and his widow settled in Paris, where she pursued the occupation of a midwife, and when the persecution of Port Royal waxed hot, sheltered De Saçi and Singlin in her house in the Fauxbourg St. Marceau.*

In October, 1655, the young Racine, then sixteen years

* Conf. vol. i. pp. 161, 326.

of age, was transferred from Beauvais to the schools of Port Royal, which, not long before had been removed from Paris. He appears to have belonged to that branch of the schools which, under the care of Lancelot and Nicole, was established in the farm buildings of Les Granges. Here, an orphan, many of whose near relations were connected with the monastery, he was a true child of Port Royal, in whose welfare others, as well as his appointed teachers, took a friendly interest. He preserved throughout his life a grateful remembrance of Hamon's kindness. A letter from Le Maître addressed, "Pour le petit Racine à Port Royal," is worth transcribing, as a proof of the domestic relation in which the boy poet stood to the solitaries. It is written on March 21st, 1656, from Bourgfontaine, whither, after the expulsion of Arnauld from the Sorbonne, Le Maître had been compelled to retire.*

"My Son, I beg you to send me as soon as possible my 'Apologie des Saints Pères;' it is the first edition, and is bound in marbled calf, in quarto. I have received the five volumes of my 'Councils,' which you had packed very well; I am much obliged to you. Send me word if all my books are at the château, well arranged upon the shelves; and if all my eleven volumes of St. Chrysostom are there; and look at them from time to time to clean them. You must put water into the earthenware saucers, where they are, that the mice may not gnaw them. Give my compliments to Madame Racine, and to your good aunt, and follow their advice in everything. Young people ought always to let themselves be led, and not try to free themselves from restraint. Perhaps God will bring us back to where you are. Nevertheless we must try to profit by this persecution, and to make it useful in detaching us from

* Œuvres de Racine, p. 650.

the world, which appears to us so hostile to piety. Good bye, my dear son; always love your papa, as he loves you. Write to me now and then. Send me also my folio 'Tacitus.'"

The three years which Racine spent at Port Royal were a time of quiet work, not seldom interrupted by a restless longing for a wider and a brighter world than the valley which lay below Les Granges. He acquired a creditable knowledge of Latin and Greek, as well as some acquaintance with Italian and Spanish. "His means," says his son, "which were very moderate, not permitting him to buy the beautiful editions of the Greek authors, he read them in the editions published at Basle, which are without Latin translations. I have inherited his 'Plato' and his 'Plutarch,' the margins of which, loaded with his annotations, prove the attention with which he read them. And the same books show the extreme attention paid at Port Royal to purity of morals; for in these editions, though all in Greek, the somewhat free, or rather naïve passages which are found in the narratives of Plutarch, an historian otherwise so grave, are very carefully effaced. They did not trust a young man even with a Greek book, without precaution." His greatest pleasure was to bury himself in the abbey woods with his Sophocles or his Euripides, both of which he knew almost by heart. Perhaps his good teachers would rather have seen him absorbed in some volume of St. Augustine or St. Jerome; but their time was not yet come. We are told that he found one day — how came such a book at Port Royal?— the old Greek tale "Theagenes and Chariclea." Lancelot came upon him as he was reading it, and at once threw the pernicious volume into the fire. A second copy, which he found means to procure, shared the same fate. By some stratagem he became possessed of a third, which after a time he volun-

tarily brought to Lancelot, saying "You may burn this like the rest; I know it by heart."

While his grandmother and his aunt and the solitaries were pleasing themselves with the thought that they were educating their boy into a churchman, after the pattern of Port Royal, he was all the while training himself into a poet. The poems of this period still find a place in his works. There are six odes, in which he describes in pompous, boyish phrase, yet not without some touches of fancy and natural feeling, the woods, the lakes, the meadows, the buildings of Port Royal. He translated into French verses, long afterwards retouched and published, the festival hymns of the Roman breviary. We have a Latin poem, in elegiac verse, "Ad Christum;" and the conclusion of another elegy, on the watch-dog of the monastery, to whom, with true youthful confidence, he promises the immortality which the poet can bestow: —

> "Semper honor, Rabutine, tuus, laudesque manebunt;
> Carminibus vives tempus in omne meis."

But no one saw anything more in his poetry than a foolish rebellion against the discipline of the place. He showed his hymns to De Saçi, who in his youth had also felt poetical aspirations; and in his "Heures de Port Royal" had translated some of the canticles of the Church. It has been said that jealousy prompted De Saçi to advise Racine to abandon verse-making as an occupation for which nature had not fitted him; we, who know the good director better, will impute to him nothing worse than want of taste. The admonition at the end of Le Maître's letter; the story of the forbidden Greek novel, above all, the way in which Racine wrote of Port Royal when he left it, show that the restraints of the place chafed his spirit, and allow us to conjecture that he welcomed the change to the College d'Harcourt, at Paris, whither he was sent in 1658. And

yet he loved the valley where he had spent three quiet years with Plato, and Sophocles, and Euripides; as well as the teachers who had introduced him into such noble companionship. These early impressions were the deepest ever made upon a very tender heart, and outlasted all others. Le Maître and Hamon forgot that the world, which had become dull and distasteful to them, still lay beyond the horizon of the pupil's vision, gay with unimagined beauty and delight; that the dreams of fame, which they had renounced as unsubstantial, lured him on, the most solid prize of life. Who ever learns his practical wisdom by help of another's experience? Their theory of human life was narrow enough to shut out many possible cases of innocent and healthy development; and assuredly did not include Racine's. A Protestant judgment might be, that his youthful instincts were wiser and truer than his mature reflections; and that when he set out to conquer the French stage by masterpieces, no line of which, the most sensitive conscience, need "dying, wish to blot," he had a more correct conception of the right object of human striving, than when, in the full blossom of his powers he condemned himself to silence. I fancy that I see, in the odes of which I have spoken, the germ of the repentance to come; the key-note of his inner life is struck not in the strains to which the world has listened with delight, but in the uncertain melody of these early and half-forgotten preludes.

Racine had passed through a course of philosophy at the College d'Harcourt, when the marriage of the King in 1660 was the occasion of reams of complimentary verse. The young poet seized the opportunity, and addressed to the new Queen an ode, entitled "La Nymphe de la Seine," which he induced his cousin Vitart, intendant of the Duc de Chevreuse, to take to Chapelain, now a forgotten poet, but then supposed to be an almost unapproachable genius.

The great man condescended to keep the ode three days, and to return it with many written annotations. "It was very beautiful—very poetical: many of the stanzas could not be better. If the author revised the few passages which had been marked, he would make a fine piece of it." One whole verse had to be changed; Racine had put Tritons in the Seine, and Tritons only live in salt water. So he obediently made the required alterations; wishing meanwhile, he says, that all the Tritons were drowned for the trouble they gave him; and once more took the ode to Chapelain. By him it was shown to the minister Colbert, and Colbert, we are to suppose, brought it under the eyes of the King. The result was an immediate gift of 100 louis. It is impossible to wonder that when this act of youthful generosity had been followed by a constant stream of favours, the effect of which was heightened by the most gracious and flattering familiarity, Louis XIV. rivalled even Port Royal in Racine's mature affections.*

The old love was indeed beginning to grow cold. Before his ode, Racine had written a sonnet on the birth of a child of Madame Vitart, or, according to another account, to Cardinal Mazarin on the conclusion of the peace of the Pyrenees, which had given deep offence at Port Royal. In the same letter to the Abbé le Vasseur, in which he relates the fortunes of his ode, he says, "I was ready to consult, like Malherbe, an old servant, if I had not found out that she is as Jansenist as her master, and might betray me, which would be my total ruin, for I receive every day letters upon letters, or rather excommunications upon excommunications, on account of my unlucky sonnet."† He seems to have been living, while in Paris, at the hôtel of the Duc de Luynes, and after a time was sent down to Chevreuse, his country house, to super-

* Lettres, écrites dans sa jeunesse, nos. 3, 4.

† Œuvres, p. 469.

intend the erection of some new buildings. Excommunications from home are not exactly calculated to reclaim a young poet, who has just tasted for the first time the sweets of fame and of royal favour; and Racine, impatient of his exile from Paris, never designates Chevreuse — Chevreuse in the close neighbourhood of those holy retreats which but the other day he praised with so fluent a pen — by any more reverent name than that of 'Babylon.' It is a very old story: youth is confident in its powers, age in its experience: and warnings which, under some circumstances would soothe and instruct, are at others like oil poured upon fire. So when in 1661 the full tide of trouble poured in upon Port Royal, Racine writes thus coldly, almost mockingly: —

"I went this afternoon to congratulate (upon receiving good news of a son) Madame, our holy aunt*, who believed herself incapable of any joy since the loss of her holy father, or as M. Gomberville said, her future husband.† In fact, he is no longer upon the throne of St. Augustine; and has avoided, by a prudent retreat, the unpleasantness of receiving a *lettre-de-cachet*, by which he was sent to Quimper. The seat has not been vacant very long. The court, without having consulted the Holy Spirit, according to what people say, has raised M. Bail to it. . . You doubtless know him; perhaps he is among your friends. All the consistory have made a schism at the creation of this new pope, and have retired in one direction and another, suffering themselves to be governed by the monitories of M. Singlin, who is now considered only an anti-pope. *Percutiam pastorem, et dispergentur oves gregis.* This prophecy was never more completely accomplished, and of all that great number of solitaries there remain hardly M. Guays, and Maître Maurice."‡

* Mad. Vitart the elder. † M. Singlin. ‡ Œuvres, p. 473.

Racine's situation, to the pious fears of his friends at Port Royal, seemed to become less hopeful every day. He had made the acquaintance of La Fontaine. He had borrowed money of his cousin Vitart, who rather abetted than checked his rebellion. He had offered a piece, "The Loves of Ovid," to the company of the Hôtel de Bourgogne, and was writing gallant notes to an actress about her part.* He had chosen no profession, and did not seem inclined to choose any but this profitless and pernicious pursuit of vain literature. It was evidently time that something should be done, and a possibility of advancement in the Church seemed to offer itself at the right moment. Père Sconin, Canon of St^e Geneviève, official and grand vicar of the diocese of Uzès, a busy churchman, whose benefices I have not space to enumerate, was Racine's maternal uncle, and now sent for him into Languedoc, promising that by and bye he would resign his preferment to him, and in the meantime would provide for him by some priory in the gift of his chapter. Perhaps Racine's friends, when they advised him to accept the offer, both exaggerated the perils of his Parisian dissipation and flattered themselves that, once in the Church, the influence of his education would return and make him all they wished him to be. So, as 1661 drew to a close, he set out for Uzès, where his uncle received him with open arms.

He seems to have accepted his exile with a tolerable grace. His uncle was kind, and Racine's facile disposition was easily won by kindness; he may have felt a misgiving of his pecuniary success as a poet, and thought, that some sinecure piece of preferment would hardly stand in the way even of his literary designs. So he accommodated himself in everything to Père Sconin's wishes; assumed the garb and the habits of a student of theology; and as the

* St^e Beuve, vol. v. p. 450.

citizens of Uzès spoke a barbarous patois, abstained without much reluctance from their society. "My uncle," he writes *, "has given me a room near him, and says that I shall help him a little in the multiplicity of his affairs. I assure you that he has plenty. Not only does he transact all the business of the diocese, but he has also the sole administration of the capitular income, until he has paid 80,000 livres of debts, which the chapter has contracted. . . . . In addition to all this trouble, he has also that of building, for he is finishing a very pretty house, which he began a year or two ago on a benefice about half a league from Uzès, which belongs to him." Then, after complaining of the absence of some necessary document which he ought to have brought with him from Paris, he goes on, "For the rest we shall not fail to go to Avignon, one of these days; for my uncle wants to buy some books, and wishes me to study. I ask no better, and I assure you that I have not yet had the curiosity to see the town of Uzès, or any one in it. He much wishes that I should learn a little theology in St. Thomas, and I very willingly fall in with it. In fine I agree as easily as may be in all his wishes; he is of a very kind disposition, and shows me all possible tenderness."

In another letter, addressed to his cousin Vitart†, he says, "I pass all my time with my uncle, with St. Thomas, and with Virgil; I make many theological and some poetical extracts; this is the way in which I pass my time, and I am not weary, especially when I receive a letter from you; it serves me for company during two days. My uncle has all manner of good plans for me; but nothing is yet sure, because the affairs of the Chapter are still uncertain. I am waiting for a 'demissory.' Nevertheless he has made me dress from head to foot in black. The fashion of this country is to

* Œuvres, p. 474. † Ibid. p. 479.

wear Spanish cloth, which is very beautiful, and costs twenty-three livres. He has got me a coat made of it; and I now look like one of the best citizens of the town. He is always waiting for an opportunity of giving me some preferment; and then I shall try to pay a part of my debts, if I can; for before that time I can do nothing. I recall before my eyes, all the importunities which you have received from me, and I blush as I write to you: *erubuit puer, salva res est.* But my affairs are no better, and this sentence is very false, except you are willing to take the blush as an acknowledgment of all that I owe you, which I shall never forget as long as I live."

Racine's letters from Uzès are certainly not those of one who was looking forward with pious ardour to the ecclesiastical life; but they are the letters of a clever, ingenuous, somewhat facile youth, who was trying to adapt himself to an inevitable necessity as honestly as he could, and made no pretence to an enthusiasm which he did not feel. On the 16th of May, 1662, he writes to M. Vitart*, "I will try to write this afternoon to my aunt Vitart, and to my aunt the nun, since you complain of me in that respect. You ought, nevertheless, to excuse me if I have not done so, and they too; for what can I tell them? It is enough to play the hypocrite here, without doing so at Paris by letter; for I call it hypocrisy to write letters, in which one must speak only of piety, and do nothing else than beg for prayers. It is not that I have not good need of them, but I wish that they would pray for me, without my being obliged to ask it of them so much. If God wills that I should be a prior, I will do for others as much as they have done for me." At the same time his letters betray the fact that his heart is much more with the poets than the fathers. He begins a tragedy on the story of Theagenes

* Œuvres, p. 485.

and Chariclea. He finds the tale intractable, and commences another on the classical subject of the hatred of Eteocles and Polynices. I fancy that, docile nephew as he is, he watches with no great dissatisfaction Père Sconin's fruitless attempts to provide for him in the Church. In the solitude of Uzès, Paris would appear inexpressibly attractive; and lying on his oars for a year might tempt the young adventurer to a brighter estimate of his success in the pursuit of literature. So in 1663 he returns, not unwillingly, to Paris.

He came back with his first tragedy, "The Thebaid," half-finished; and a fixed determination to devote himself henceforward to poetry. Thoughout Racine's life two opposing forces contended for supremacy over him; on the one side, literature, the court, the King; on the other, religion, the influence of early training, Port Royal. The opposition was undoubted, even if to an impartial judgment, it might not have appeared necessary; the King would hold no parley with Port Royal, and Port Royal would make no terms with the theatre. Now it is beginning to be the turn of literature and the world; and the King, by a well-timed and gracious liberality, ensures the victory to his side. Racine had brought with him from Uzès, or had composed soon after his return, an ode, entitled, "La Renommée aux Muses." He took the verses to court, and received in payment a pension of 600 livres, granted, as the patent expressed it, "that he might have the means of continued application to polite literature." But the pension, although subsequently increased to 1500, and again to 2000 livres, was not the most important consequence of the ode. It procured him the friendship of Boileau. The Abbé le Vasseur showed it to the future satirist, who returned it with many sensible but complimentary criticisms. Personal intercourse followed; and an affection and esteem, unbroken while life lasted. A

few hours before his death, Racine murmured to his friend, "I count it a piece of good fortune, that I die before you."

Nicolas Boileau was born at Paris, or according to another account at Crône, a village not far from the capital, in 1636; though sometimes he post-dated his birth by a year, to justify a courtly speech which he one day made to Louis XIV.; "I was born a year before your Majesty, to announce the wonders of your reign." He was the eleventh child of Gilles Boileau, who held the office of "Greffier du Conseil de la Grand' Chambre;" and to distinguish himself from his brothers, took the surname of Despréaux, from a little meadow in the village of Crône. Of these Gilles was a poet, who obtained the honour of admission to the French Academy twenty-five years before his more celebrated brother, but is now remembered only as bearing unworthily the name of Boileau. We meet another, Jacques, in the memoirs of the time, as the Abbé Boileau, a gay and witty churchman. Nicolas, the great satirist, had no very agreeable recollections of his youth; he would not have his life again, he said, on the condition of passing through the same boyhood. He lost his mother when not a year old; and before he had finished his education, underwent, not without much preliminary torture, the operation of cutting for the stone. Like Racine, he studied at the Collège d'Harcourt, and afterwards at that of Beauvais; where, whatever his proficiency in graver literature, he spent days and nights in reading poetry and novels, and exercised his immature talent of versification. But the law was to be his profession, and in 1656 he was called to the bar.

A very short trial convinced him that he was not destined to become Avocat-Général, and he went through a course of study at the Sorbonne. This, however, was a

second disappointment; he soon found that scholastic theology was "only legal chicanery in another dress." In all likelihood, however, he had not betaken himself to theology without a definite prospect of preferment, for he immediately became Prior of Sainte-Paterne, a benefice worth 800 livres a year. This he held for eight or nine years; when, fully persuaded that he had no aptitude for the ecclesiastical life, he not only resigned it, but expended in charity a sum equal to his whole receipt from the revenues of the Church. Henceforward he devoted himself wholly to poetry, and deliberately assumed the function of the satirist. His friends warned him, that he was thus preparing for himself legions of enemies. "Well," was his reply, "I shall be an honest man, and will not fear them." If in after life he conciliated more than an ordinary amount of affection and esteem, and excited no more enmities than seem inevitably to cling to the literary profession, the explanation lies in the fact, that his satire attacked abuses and mistakes rather than men, and always fought on the side of good morals and good taste. Perhaps after all, his father was not so far wrong, when he said of the boy satirist, "Colin is a good lad, who will never speak evil of any one."

In 1660, the year in which Racine made his literary debut in his ode on the marriage of the King, Boileau first attracted attention by the satires which are now called, in the catalogue of his works, the first and the sixth. His reputation however was confined to the literary circles of Paris; and extended, if at all, only by help of rumour, to the public outside. He never willingly printed any of his works, and to the last refused to receive any remuneration from the booksellers. His wants were probably moderate; he never married, and the bounty of the King did much, in the latter part of his life, to make his circumstances easy. At the time of which we speak, his priory, and a small

property which he inherited from his father *, may have placed him in a position of independence. He read well, and beyond doubt was especially skilled in sharpening the sting of his own verses; his talent for mimicry was remarkable; satire is always eagerly sought for by a society of which every individual expects to find his own name embalmed; and unpublished satire has a piquancy of its own. So Boileau soon acquired the right of entrance into all the drawing-rooms of Paris which professed a literary taste. Madame de Sévigné, Madame de la Fayette, the Duc de la Rochefoucauld admitted him to their intimacy; and the Hôtel de Rambouillet condescended to hear and pass judgment on him. But the poets who directed the taste of that celebrated coterie, now verging upon its decline, were infected with the vicious taste against which Boileau's vigorous good sense was to wage a life-long war, and hostilities began at once. Madame de Rambouillet pronounced an unfavourable judgment on the pretensions of the young poet, who left her house not less satirically disposed than he entered it.

In 1665, the year when Racine first became acquainted with Boileau, the latter, three years older than his new friend, was at least three years before him in the race for fame. He had now written, besides an address to the King, and several minor pieces, his seven first satires. An imperfect and garbled edition of some of them had appeared at Rouen, in the same year; and in 1666 he is about, though sorely against his will, to publish the whole in a correct form. Henceforward the lives of the two poets, till the death of the younger, will run in almost the same course; the period of Racine's literary activity was also

* "Mon père, soixante ans au travail appliqué,
En mourant me laissa, pour rouler et pour vivre,
Un revenu léger, et son exemple à suivre."
Ep. V. v. 108.

that in which Boileau's muse was most fertile; and both spent the last years of the century in making vain preparations to record the warlike exploits of Louis XIV.

Shortly after his return from Languedoc, and before the commencement of his friendship with Boileau, Racine had made acquaintance with Molière. It is easy to imagine how Port Royal must have groaned over this unhappy association, for Molière was actor and manager as well as author; not only a writer of pernicious plays, but one of an excommunicated race, to whom the Church refused Christian burial. All that we know of Molière proves him to have been in every way worthy of his place in that famous fellowship of wits and poets, who were bound together by reciprocal esteem, as well as by a community of fame. But had he been other than he was, the successful manager would have been eagerly sought by the young poet, who was burning to see his first tragedy upon the stage. One account* states that the subject of the "Thebaid" had been suggested to Racine by Molière himself; though this is hardly consistent with the fact that the tragedy had been begun at Uzès, while the friendship with Molière seems to date only from the return to Paris. However this may be, the "Thebaid" was performed in 1664, at what was called the Theatre of Monsieur, at the Palais Royal, Molière himself taking the part of Eteocles.† We do not know how it was received; to critics, who compare it with his subsequent works, the subject, in its sanguinary details and exhibition of only the violent passions, appears ill chosen, and the treatment weak and nerveless. If the story was at all capable of adaptation to the modern theatre, it was a theme for Corneille; and the peculiar

* Études de Racine, ed. Marquis de la Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, vol i. p. 126.

† La Rochefoucauld, vol. i. p. 245.

excellences which Racine was about to display were not those of his illustrious rival.

One of the later annalists of Port Royal, who had probably never heard of any other Thebaid than that of the Egyptian hermits, innocently records that the sacred subject of Racine's first tragedy was due to his education in the schools. Its second title, "Les Frères Ennemis," might have directed him from the Egyptian to the Bœotian Thebes as the scene, and to the Phœnissæ of Euripides as the origin of the story. We are already upon the classical ground to which Racine, in conformity with the tradition of the French stage, so prevailingly confined himself. To trace the causes which impressed upon French and English tragedy forms so widely diverse, and breathed into them so dissimilar a spirit, would be an interesting subject of speculation, though hardly fit for this place. Both were born of the mysteries and miracle plays; both grew to a glorious maturity after but a brief and obscure youth. Yet though only a narrow strip of sea separates the two countries, whole continents of feeling lie between Shakspere and Racine. The full, many-sided, changeful life which fills the stage of the former, contrasts with the paucity of figures, the simplicity of motive, the statuesque unity of character which mark the dramas of the latter; the long development of the story, the frequent shifting of the scene, with the scrupulous, if not pedantic regard to the unities of time and place; the quick interchange of dialogue, with the elaborate and pompous tirade; the frequent transition from blank verse to prose, or rhyme, as occasion prompts, with the unvaried rise and fall of the heroic couplet. I cannot pause to dilate upon these differences, or to discuss which form of the tragic drama approaches nearest to the ideal standard of perfection. Their result is, that most Englishmen are compelled to estimate the worth of French tragedies by artificial tests. In all cases of indigenous literary pro-

ductions, international comparisons are difficult; here they are absolutely impossible. We do not consciously compare Racine and Corneille with Shakspere and Ben Jonson. When we want to find out what the former really are, we try to penetrate within the magic circle marked out by French canons of tragic excellence, and to gaze with French eyes.

The first theatre at Paris had been established about the year 1400, by the Fraternity of the Passion of our Saviour, for the representation of scriptural mysteries. These continued to afford amusement to the population of the capital for nearly a century and a half; till in 1547 or 1548, they were suddenly prohibited by the parliament as indecent and profane. In the following year the actors bought the Hôtel de Bourgogne, which they converted into a theatre; and here, in 1552, was represented the first French tragedy, the "Cleopatra" of Jodelle. Already, it is to be observed, the subject was classical; the dialogue was conducted in long speeches, and every act was concluded by a chorus. The "Dido" of the same author; the "Agamemnon" of Toutain, the "Julius Cæsar" of Grevin, soon followed; the eight tragedies of Garnier, printed in 1580, were nearly all taken from Euripides or Seneca; Hardy and Rotrou walked in the steps of their predecessors;—so that when Corneille produced his first play in 1629, the form which French tragedy was to take had been already determined. In the choice of subjects, indeed, he showed more originality than Racine; for his finest plays, "The Cid," "Les Horaces," "Cinna," "Polyeucte," have no classical prototypes. But an enumeration of the titles of his numerous plays—most of which fall far below the standard afforded by his best works—would show that many of them are founded upon incidents of classical antiquity, while the peculiarities of form, characteristic of French tragedy, the rhymed metre, the long speeches, the unbending dignity, the careful observance of

the unities, are as noticeable in his plays as in those of Racine.*

When, in 1664, "Les Frères Ennemis" was played by Molière's company, there was room for the young poet. The "Death of Pompey," the last of Corneille's plays which has a just claim to a place in the first rank, had been produced twenty years before; and though the fertile poet continued to write tragedies and comedies till almost the close of Racine's brief career, it was only to show the depth to which so aspiring a genius could descend. Rotrou had acknowledged with frank generosity, the superiority of Corneille; and no other tragic poet of the day is now more than the shadow of a name. Molière's first comedy, "L'Étourdi," had appeared in 1653, and now he was every year moving Paris to fresh laughter by some new offspring of his wit; but after a single trial, in which he was not wholly dishonoured, Racine refrained from provoking so dangerous a comparison, and devoted himself solely to the graver Muse. Corneille was perhaps more afraid of him than he of Corneille. When, in 1665, Racine finished his second tragedy, "Alexandre," he took it, no doubt with a beating heart, to the house of his great rival. The latter listened attentively, and then bade his young friend give up all hopes of distinction as a tragic poet. His poetic talents were great; of dramatic power he had none. Was it an honest criticism, or had the author of the "Cid" some dim foreboding of the contest for contemporary fame, in which he was to be so hopelessly worsted?

"Alexandre" aroused both friendly and hostile criticism; though perhaps on the whole the former predominated. St. Evremond said "that the old age of Corneille alarmed him no longer; there was now no reason to believe that tragedy would die with him." Still, the piece showed

* Hallam, Literature of Europe, vol. i. p. 444; vol. ii. p. 262; vol. iii. p. 291, *et seq.*

more promise than performance; the versification was too facile; the interest feeble, and the characters, especially that of Alexander, lifeless and indistinct. But while it raised the young poet's reputation, and encouraged the world to expect greater things from him, it put an end to his intimate friendship with Molière. The precise history of the rupture is not easily disentangled from the varying, and to some extent, contradictory statements of the commentators. Louis Racine says that his father, discontented with the representation of his play by Molière's company, not only transferred it to the troupe at the Hôtel de Bourgogne, but with it induced one of the best actresses to change her allegiance. Another authority * asserts that Molière, in the first place, refused the parts either of Alexander or of Porus; that his theatre, being that of the court, was closed soon after the first representation of "Alexandre," in consequence of the death of Anne of Austria; that Racine, unwilling to wait three months for a second performance, produced the tragedy at the Hôtel de Bourgogne; and that the actress, alleged to have been enticed away, took, as is proved by the still extant playbill, no part in the representation. Wherever the truth may lie among these stories, Racine and Molière were no longer friends. It is to the credit of both, that they did not become enemies; but spoke, as honest men should, of each others' character and genius. When Racine's single comedy, "Les Plaideurs," was at first unsuccessful, Molière loudly expressed his opinion of its merits. Racine, on the other hand, when an officious acquaintance hastened to assure him that "Le Misanthrope" had failed, replied, "You have seen it, and I have not; nevertheless I don't believe a word you say, for it is not possible that Molière should have written a bad play. Go back again, and examine it more closely."

* La Rochefoucauld, vol. i. p. 144.

About this time — the exact date is uncertain — came the final excommunication. Racine had never willingly sundered himself from Port Royal; but now Port Royal will have none of him. His aunt, La Mère Agnès de St. Thèkle, writes to him: —

"Having learned that you intended to make a journey hither, I had asked permission of our mother to see you, because some persons had assured us that you designed to think seriously of your present condition; and I should have been very glad to hear this from yourself, that I might testify to you the joy I should feel if God were pleased to touch your heart. But I heard, a few days ago, a piece of news which has greatly troubled me. I write to you in the bitterness of my heart, and shedding tears which I wish I could pour forth before God in such abundance as to obtain from Him your salvation, which is what I desire more ardently than anything in the world. I have then learned with grief that you associate more than ever with persons whose very name is abominable to all who have any piety, — and rightly, since they are forbidden to enter the church, and the communion of the faithful, even in the hour of death, unless they repent. Judge then for yourself, my dear nephew, in what a condition I cannot but be, since you are not ignorant of the love I have always borne to you, and that I have never desired anything so much as that you should be wholly devoted to God in some honourable occupation. I adjure you, then, my dear nephew, to have pity on your soul, and to look into your own heart with a view of seriously considering what an abyss it is into which you have thrown yourself. I wish that what has been said to me may not be true; but if you have been so unhappy as not to have broken off an intercourse which is dishonourable to you in the sight of God and men, you ought not to think of visiting us; for you are well aware that I could not speak

to you, knowing you to be in so deplorable and anti-christian a condition. Nevertheless, I will not cease to ask God to have mercy on you, and on me in being merciful to you, since your salvation is so near to my heart." *

This letter, whatever its precise date, must have been written in the very agony of Port Royal, when the dissolution of the community was imminent, and its chief defenders already scattered to their various hiding-places. Had Racine felt any lively sympathy in his friends' quarrel, their almost hopeless misfortune would have been to a good heart, like his, a reason for sacrificing much, in order to range himself on their side. But the bonds which now held him to Port Royal were wholly personal; he cared nothing for the "fait," and not much for the "droit"; however sorry he might be to see his old teachers compelled to quit their beloved solitude, he had chosen his own path in life, which was not theirs, and which it was now too late to change. But the receipt of this letter caused even a personal alienation. It was probably only the last of a long series like itself, wearying him with remonstrances which awoke no echo in his conscience, and urging on him a way of life against which his whole soul rebelled. Why, he may have asked himself, should he give up a career, in which he saw nothing sinful or dishonourable, at the moment when certain success waited to crown his striving, because his aunt and her confessor, and others like them, believed in the necessary wickedness of stage-plays? The King smiled upon him; the public went to see his tragedies; the best wits of Paris were his friends; and he had only to work in the way that was easiest and most agreeable to him to ensure his fortune. So he met the excommunication of Port Royal with an open defiance, and henceforward there is war between them.

* Œuvres de Racine, p. 650.

Before long, open hostilities broke out, and that on an occasion so trifling as to show how intense was the hidden fire which had long lain smouldering. We have before noticed the "Lettres Visionnaires" which Nicole wrote against Desmarêts de Saint Sorlin, who had published a scurrilous attack upon the "Apology of the Nuns of Port Royal." * In the first of these †, he calls attention to the fact, that Desmarêts, who in his later years had set up for a prophet, had once been a writer of plays and novels, and then delivers himself of a bitter invective against all such. "A writer of romances and a dramatic poet is a public poisoner, not of the bodies but of the souls of the faithful, who ought to look upon himself as guilty of an infinite number of spiritual homicides, which he either has caused, or might have caused, by his pernicious writings. The greater care he takes to cover with a veil of decency the criminal passions which he describes, the more he makes them dangerous and able to surprise and corrupt simple and innocent souls." Against the anonymous author of the "Visionnaires," Racine, like Congreve against Collier, took up arms. His cause was better than Congreve's, for both the plays and romances of the time, if we may judge from such as still retain some reputation, were distinguished by a decency of treatment which contrasts favourably with the Elizabethan drama, and still more with that of the Restoration. But his defence of himself and his brother poets is as wrong-headed as Nicole's attack. His letter, addressed to the author of the "Lettres Visionnaires," published in January 1666, is a lampoon, not an argument. It is but short, yet long enough to probe all the weaknesses of the Jansenists, to repeat with an added sting all the calumnies of the Jesuits; Le Maître is not spared, nor even La Mère Angélique. There is no attempt to discuss the grounds upon which prose or

* Vol. i. p. 426. † Lettres Visionnaires, p. 51.

poetic fiction may be justified: the letter is no more than a series of quick sharp thrusts at every unguarded point of the adversary's armour. Though on the wrong side, it much more closely resembles a "provincial letter" than the imitations of them by Nicole, to which it was an answer: the style has the same clearness, motion, point, as Pascal's, but the sarcasm is deficient in humour, and the wit is employed rather to crush an enemy than to establish a principle. In a word, the letter was Racine's revenge for the excommunication of Port Royal.

The public read, and laughed: Nicole, though the arrow from his own quiver must have inflicted a wound, held his peace. Two champions, however, started up, M. du Bois and M. Barbier d'Aucourt, each of whom published a long, dull, anonymous reply to Racine's letter. The latter, who was probably by this time half-ashamed of his heat, would have let the controversy drop, had not Nicole, in the collected edition of his letters published at Liège in 1667, printed the two replies, with a prefatory commendation, and added a short treatise upon comedy, which he had written at some previous period. Racine looked upon this as a renewal of the debate, and forthwith prepared a second letter in defence of the first. But before sending this to the printers, he took it to Boileau, who advised him to abstain from warfare with men to whom he was under great personal obligations, and who, at that moment, had work and trouble enough upon their hands. Racine's good heart was instantly touched by the remonstrance: he withheld the second letter from publication, and bought up, as far as he was able, the edition of the first. The second letter, however, with its preface, appears in the modern editions of his works. It was found among the papers of his cousin, the Abbé Dupin, and published in the year 1722.*

* Conf. Vie de Nicole, p. 148, *et seq.*

"Andromaque," which was produced in 1667, and printed in the following year, at once elevated Racine to the side of Corneille. It was dedicated to the Duchess of Orleans, the daughter of Charles I. and Henrietta Maria, whose mysterious and untimely death is one of the dark places in the family history of the Bourbons. The poet was indebted to the Andromache of Euripides for little more than the character of Hermione: the real origin of the story is that passage of Virgil * where Æneas describes his meeting with Andromache on the coast of Epirus, and hears from her lips the tale of her fortunes. But he has used the privilege often assumed by the Greek poets, to make such alterations in the mythus as appeared calculated to heighten the dramatic interest of the plot. One change in particular is very happy. The play turns on the love of Andromache for her son, who in Euripides is Molossus, her child by Pyrrhus. But Racine, going back to Homer's conception of Andromache as the faithful wife of Hector, has substituted Astyanax for Molossus, and brought her fidelity to the memory of Hector into conflict with her devotion to the interests of Astyanax, whom Pyrrhus engages to protect against the anger of the Greeks if she will but listen to his suit. This is not, however, the opportunity for critical remarks, which belong rather to the history of French literature than to that of Port Royal. The "Andromaque" was a great improvement upon either of its author's former plays: the plot is interesting, the denouement unexpected, the characters of Andromache and Hermione well contrasted. From this point the influence of Boileau is to be clearly traced in all Racine's works. At one of their first interviews, the younger poet had made a half boast of the ease with

* Æneid, book iii. line 292, *et seq.*

which the verses flowed from his pen. "I must teach you," said Boileau, "to make verses with difficulty, and you are clever enough to learn the lesson soon." We see the result in the increased nervousness and more concentrated force of the couplets of the "Andromaque."

In the permission to print the "Andromaque," dated December 28th, 1667, Racine is dignified with the title of Prieur de l'Epinay. For a few months the poet was a churchman, if indeed the possession of one of those benefices which were at this time frequently held by laymen, were sufficient to make him one. How, or from whom he obtained his preferment we are not told; he had not enjoyed it long, before a suit of ejectment was brought against him on the ground that the Priory could legally be held only by a regular. The process was long and intricate; if Racine may be trusted, intelligible neither to himself, nor to the judges; and was concluded at last by his voluntary resignation of the prize in dispute. He avenged himself on the law by his comedy of "Les Plaideurs;" which, in the broad humour of some of its incidents, borrowed from the "Wasps" of Aristophanes, approaches more nearly to Molière's wildest sallies than to the grave and polished adaptation of Terence, which we should naturally expect from Racine. The character of the Countess, who, at the request of her family, had been prohibited from going to law; and of the Advocate, who begins his speech in defence of a dog which had stolen a chicken, with a quotation from Cicero, were taken from real life. Other hints were supplied by Boileau and a troop of joyous friends, who at this time frequently supped with Racine at a well-known tavern. An elaborate code of laws governed the little society; and to read a certain quantity of Chapelain's poem "La Pucelle," which always lay upon a side-table, was the penalty of transgression. Twenty lines was the punishment of a grave offence;

and the culprit who was compelled to read a whole page was supposed to have been condemned to death. The comedy, which was the offspring of so many wits, was nevertheless unsuccessful, till, about a month after its production at Paris, it was played before the King at Versailles. It took the royal fancy, and the overjoyed comedians, on their late return to the city, knocked up the poet to announce the unexpected success. His neighbours did not doubt that the outraged majesty of the law had avenged itself on the satirist; but on the morrow flocked to view with different eyes a piece which the royal taste had approved.

"Britannicus," Racine's next effort, appeared in 1669, and was dedicated to the Duc de Chevreuse, Lancelot's old pupil, for whom the "Port Royal Logic" was originally composed. Its success was for some time doubtful.* "Of all the works which I have given to the public," says the author in the preface, "none has called forth more applause, or more censure than this." And then, he goes on to complain that many of the criticisms directed against the piece had been dictated by personal or party animosity. The truth is, that by this time Racine was fully recognised by the public as the rival of Corneille; while the yearly triumphs of the younger excited the friends of the elder poet to an ungenerous bitterness of animadversion. The one was in possession of the stage, and showed by every

* A curious anecdote is told of this play. Up to the time of its performance, Louis XIV., who was a graceful dancer, had been accustomed to exhibit his powers in the ballets of the court. But he danced no more after hearing the lines in which Narcissus describes to Nero the opinion of the Romans on his unkingly accomplishments:

"Pour toute ambition, pour vertu singulière,
Il excelle à conduire un char dans la carrière,
À disputer des prix indignes de ses mains,
À se donner lui-même en spectacle aux Romains,
À venir prodiguer sa voix sur un théâtre. . . .

Britannicus, act iv. sc. 4.

fresh piece that he had hardly reached the maturity of his powers; the other could only appeal to past victories, which men were beginning to forget in the ineffectual efforts of to-day. Racine in his preface, answers some of the criticisms on "Britannicus," made by Corneille's friends, by parallel criticisms on the tragedies of Corneille; and then not indistinctly hints that his rival had been guilty of intrigues to mar the success of his play. Perhaps Corneille was arrogant and incautious in his talk, as Racine was certainly ill able to bear the shafts of bon-mot, epigram, parody, which were freely launched against him. If he were wronged, he had a noble revenge, when on the death of Corneille, it fell to his lot as temporary President of the Academy, to pronounce a just and warm panegyric upon the author of "Polyeucte" and the "Cid."

The rivalry became even more declared, when the Duchess of Orleans, Henrietta Stuart, proposed to the two poets the subject of Berenice. Both obeyed her behests; though Boileau, whose perception of the dramatic shortcomings of the story was stronger than his courtliness, declared, that had he been Racine, he would have made no such rash promise. Corneille's friends — still perhaps the majority of the play-going public — prophesied Racine's failure, and quoted Virgil in scornful pity: —

"Infelix puer, atque impar congressus Achilli."

But the subject, such as it was, gave more scope to Racine's power of delineating the affections than to Corneille's nervous declamation; and the victory indisputably belonged to the younger combatant. Once more, however, Racine's pleasure in success was marred by captious criticism and irreverent parody. A travestie of Berenice appeared at the Théâtre Italien. Racine went to see it, and joined in the laugh, though, as he confessed afterwards, only from the teeth outwards. A bon-mot of Chapelle's

vexed him even more than the burlesque. "Tell me, as a friend," said Racine, "what you really think of 'Berenice.'" "What I think?" replied the wit; "Marion pleure, Marion crie, Marion veut qu'on la marie." Those who have sympathised with the love and mutual self-renunciation of Titus and Berenice, and yet found the play unexciting and barren of tragic incident, will admit that the epigram is not without a sting of truth.

"Berenice" was produced in 1670; "Bajazet" followed in 1672. For once, Racine strayed into modern times in search of a subject, though with much doubt as to the success of the experiment. "Distance of place," he says in his preface, "repairs, to some extent, the too great proximity of time; for the public makes little difference between that which is—if I may say so—a thousand years, and that which is a thousand leagues distant." And then he goes on to allege the example of Æschylus, who, himself a combatant at the battle of Salamis, did not hesitate to write the "Persæ." Corneille is reported to have said that the personages of "Bajazet" wore Turkish dresses, but uttered French sentiments. Perhaps the criticism is not wholly unfair, though the application of it is undoubtedly too narrow. There is a Gallicism, sufficiently visible to a foreign eye, in all Corneille's Romans, in all Racine's Greeks; even when the external likeness is faithfully rendered, there is a want of the antique spirit. Were an impartial criticism possible, it would be instructive to compare Shakspere's Romans with those of the French stage; and to mark how, in the one case, the spirit is faithfully rendered, in spite of much negligence of the form,—how, in the other, the most careful attention to classical propriety and precedent hardly hides an inability to pass beyond the limits of national and modern feeling.

The way in which Corneille's admirers struggled against the success of Racine, and the manifestly failing powers of

their own poet, is amusingly exemplified in Madame de Sévigné's criticism on "Bajazet." Before she had seen it, she writes to her daughter *, "Racine has written a play called 'Bajazet,' which bears away the bell; truly it does not go *en empirando* like the rest. M. de Tallard says that it surpasses the pieces of Corneille as much as they surpass those of Boyer; — that is what I call praise." When, two days afterwards, she has seen it, she is compelled to praise, though she still chooses to ascribe the impression made upon her to the acting of Madame de Champmêlé, and reserves Corneille's claim to her highest admiration. "'Bajazet' is fine; I find it somewhat confused towards the end; and there is a great deal of passion, and of passion less foolish than that of 'Berenice'; nevertheless, in my opinion it does not surpass 'Andromaque.' As to the fine comedies of Corneille, they are as much above it as your conception was above — Set to work and recall that folly; and believe that nothing will ever approach, I do not say surpass I say that nothing will ever approach certain divine passages of Corneille." † By and bye, when Madame de Grignan has read the play, her mother writes: "You have estimated 'Bajazet' very rightly and very well; and you will have seen that I am of your opinion. I wish I could send you La Champmêlé to warm up the piece for you. The character of Bajazet is icy; the manners of the Turks are ill-observed — they do not take so much trouble about a marriage; the denouement is not well brought about; one doesn't see the reasons of that great massacre; there are, nevertheless, some very agreeable things, but nothing perfectly beautiful, nothing that carries one away — none of those declamations of Corneille which make one shudder. My child, let us take heed how we compare him with Racine; let us always feel the dif-

* January 13th, 1672. † January 15th, 1672.

ference; the pieces of the latter have cold and feeble passages, and he will never surpass 'Alexandre' and 'Andromaque'; 'Bajazet' is below them, in the opinion of many persons, and, if I may venture to quote myself, in mine. Racine makes comedies for La Champmêlé, and not for ages to come; if ever he is older, or ceases to be in love, you will see if I am mistaken. Long live, then, our old friend Corneille; let us forgive him some bad verses, in consideration of the divine sallies with which we have been transported,—they are inimitable proofs of a master's hand. Des Préaux says still more on this matter than I; in a word, it is good taste; keep to it." * A story of somewhat doubtful authority represents Madame de Sévigné as predicting that the taste for Racine and the taste for coffee would pass away together. The prophecy was unlucky in both its parts, unless we put upon it a sense precisely contrary to that which the prophet intended. It is, however, but justice to the lively lady to admit that the phrase is not to be found in her published letters.

The passage just quoted, in which Racine's name is connected with that of Madame de Champmêlé, gave great umbrage to Louis Racine, who, himself a Jansenist, and born after his father's reconciliation with Port Royal, endeavours to wipe away the stain from his memory. His explanation of the undeniable intimacy which existed between Racine and the heroine of so many of his plays, is, that La Champmêlé was not a born actress; that she needed careful instruction to be able to use her advantages of voice and person; and that the poet drilled her into the satisfactory representative of his conceptions. It is impossible now to say whether this statement contains the whole truth, or is the ingenious apology of a son, who has hardly more

* March 16th, 1672. It should be observed that Mad. de Sévigné uses the word comedy in a sense equivalent to the English, "play."

than a half sympathy with his father's dramatic career. But if, on the one hand, Port Royal, as represented by Louis Racine, might close its eyes to evil, where evil undoubtedly existed; it is, on the other, dangerous to suppose that the scandalous reports of a licentious age have always a foundation of truth. If it be a reproach to purity that it is blind to all but its own reflection; the scoff may as truly, and with a deeper moral significance, be uttered against impurity. I venture, in the absence of more conclusive evidence, to think with Louis Racine, that the influence of Port Royal was always too deeply impressed upon his father's honest and kindly heart, to permit him to engage in an intrigue such as this. One form of the story is suceptible of disproof. Mr. Hallam says that "the fine acting of Madlle. de Champmêlé in 'Andromaque' secured the success of the play. Racine, after the first representation, threw himself at her feet in a transport of gratitude, which was soon changed to love." * If, however, we may trust the list of actors in Racine's plays, published by the Marquis de la Rochefoucauld, Madame de Champmêlé took no part either in "Andromaque" or "Britannicus," and first appears in 1671, as the representative of Berenice. †

We must suppose that Racine was not satisfied with his success in treating a modern story, for his dramas, from this period to his abandonment of tragic art, are all classical, and all justify by their preeminent excellence, the author's return to the familiar ground. The first of the three, "Mithridate," which appeared in 1673, contains one of his loveliest female creations, the character of Monimia; and in its display of the vindictive mind and fierce passions of its hero, seems to challenge, and to sustain a comparison with Corneille. Voltaire tells us—and the assertion is not difficult to believe — that "Mithridate" was, of all trage-

* Hallam, Lit. Hist. part iv. chap. vi. § 5.

† La Rochefoucauld, vol. i. p. 246.

dies, Charles XII.'s favourite; that he loved to have it read to him, and would pause at the passages which pleased him most. In the same year Racine became a member of the French Academy; at the end of the next, again produced a masterpiece, the "Iphigénie."

There could hardly be a more striking proof of the way in which the reputation of a living writer may be made or marred by popular caprice, than the fact that Racine's three last tragedies had to encounter a most determined opposition, and finally achieved only a doubtful success. They are their author's best works; and comparing them, therefore, with any entire plays of Corneille, are the masterpieces of the French tragic stage. Their excellences, too, are precisely such as are fitted for popular appreciation: a simple and striking story; an harmonious versification; a conception of character, capable of being perfectly embodied by the actor and fully understood by the audience. The filial piety and patriotic courage of Iphigenia, the jealous passion of Phædra, if far less subtle and complex, and on that account less natural than some of Shakspere's conceptions, are all the more fit for stage representation; they stand out from the scene in a statuesque beauty, of which the exquisitely simple and harmonious proportions are seen at a glance.* The "Iphigénie" was produced in the same year as Corneille's last feeble drama, "Surena," and Racine's other competitors for public favour, Le Clerc, Boyer, Pradon, have sunk into deserved forgetfulness. Yet as Bononcini once divided the applause of London with Handel, and Piccini, in Paris, waged war on equal terms with Gluck, these poetasters had their hot supporters in aristocratic salons, who predicted for them an immortality of fame, when Racine should be forgotten, and meanwhile assailed the living poet in every way that malice could

* Conf. Hallam, Lit. Hist. part iv. chap. vi. §§ 11, 16.

suggest. Le Clerc, one of the Academic forty, aided by a less known ally, Coras, followed Racine's "Iphigénie" by one of his own. The first was declared by Boileau, in his third epistle, to have cost more tears than were ever shed for the real sacrifice at Aulis; the second is now known only by the epigram in which Racine added a sting to the defeat of his rivals. Before and after its production, he says, the two great poets quarrelled for the credit of the piece; before, each said that it was wholly his own; after, each protested that it was wholly the other's.

In "Iphigénie," as in "Andromaque," Racine had in view a tragedy of Euripides; but the story belongs to all antiquity. If Euripides alone has treated the subject in the dramatic form, the necessary personages of Racine's play, Agamemnon, Achilles, Clytemnestra, Ulysses, had been already drawn either by Homer, or Æschylus, or Sophocles; the fine narrative of Lucretius is familiar to every scholar; and Ovid has found a theme, in the change of Iphigenia into the hind. It must be reckoned a great triumph of the French poet, that with such rivals, he has produced a tragedy which holds the heart in breathless suspense to the last. If there is something not Homeric in the courtliness of Achilles, the fault must be laid to the original choice of a subject. It may be necessary to introduce love into every modern tragedy, but it is hard to turn an old Greek hero into a lover without some sacrifice of nature and probability. But the contest between a sense of public duty, the impulse of ambition, and the yearning of parental love in the mind of Agamemnon is finely drawn; Clytemnestra's maternal affection is as fierce as we should expect from the tigress painted by Æschylus; and Iphigenia, when once the first horror of death is past, is a noble example of meek, womanly fortitude. To evade the necessity of her sacrifice, which would hardly be tolerated on the modern stage, Racine, with his accustomed judgment, has

introduced the character of Eriphile. The declaration of the oracle, which enjoins the sacrifice of a kinswoman of Helen, is purposely left ambiguous; and Eriphile, who, unknown to herself, is a daughter of Helen by Theseus, first loses the sympathy of the spectator by her ungenerous and selfish abandonment of Iphigenia, and takes her place, in the very crisis of the action, as the required victim.

In "Phèdre," which appeared in 1677, Racine once more went to Euripides for a model, and once more surpassed him. He exercised his usual good taste in the alterations which he made in the story: Phædra dies at the catastrophe of the play, instead of in the middle; Hippolytus is not accused of an actual attempt against her honour, but only of the intention; and the interest excited by his character is increased, at least to a modern audience, by representing him as in love with Aricie. The passion of Phædra, which would otherwise be only revolting, is traced to the irresistible wrath of the gods; she struggles in vain to conquer it; she is possessed, from time to time, by better impulses: and the shame of suggesting the crime of the plot is suffered to rest with her confidante Œnone. Racine, in his preface, claims the credit of a distinct moral purpose: "For the rest," he says, "I dare not yet aver that this is indeed the best of my tragedies. I leave it both to my readers and to time to decide upon its true value. What I can aver is, that I have written none in which virtue is more conspicuously displayed than in this; the least faults are there severely punished; the very thought of crime is looked upon with as much horror as crime itself; the weaknesses of love pass for real weaknesses; the passions are set forth only to show all the disorder which they cause, and vice is everywhere depicted in colours which cause its deformity to be recognised and hated." Then, after asserting that these were the ends which the ancient tragic poets had in

view, he proceeds with a tacit reference to Port Royal, which shows the direction in which the current of his thoughts already set: "This would perhaps be a means of effecting a reconciliation between tragedy and many persons celebrated for piety and learning, who in these latter days have condemned it; but who would, without doubt, judge it more favourably if authors thought as much of instructing as of amusing their audience, and followed in this the true intention of tragedy."

The "Phèdre" stands, by common consent, side by side with the "Athalie" at the head of Racine's tragedies: the author himself preferred the first, the majority of critics perhaps the second. Yet both failed at first, and conquered their high place in public esteem only after a long interval. The "Phèdre" of Pradon appeared simultaneously with the "Phèdre" of Racine, and had a triumphant run of sixteen nights, while the real masterpiece was played to empty benches. A compact aristocratic phalanx, headed by the Duc de Nevers, who himself wrote indifferent verses, protected Pradon; and, though no actress of reputation would undertake the part of Phèdre, in opposition to Madame de Champmêlé, ensured a temporary triumph by the weight of their purses. For the first six nights of either play, they engaged all the best seats in the theatre, at a cost equivalent to 28,000 francs of the present currency. The seats were empty when Racine was on the stage, full of applauding friends for Pradon: what better manœuvre, even in these days of professional *claqueurs?* A poetess of distinction puffed Pradon in a sonnet. The sonnet was attributed to the Duc de Nevers, and a parody on it, as falsely ascribed to Racine and Boileau, raised against them the personal enmity of the irascible nobleman. It seemed as if the war of wit were to end in a war of cudgels; the Prince de Condé offered the supposed offenders the protection of his

house; "If you are innocent, come; and if you are guilty, come too;" but the sonnet was acknowledged by its real authors; the public began to distinguish the diamond from the paste, and "Phèdre" was victorious over the cabal. The pæan was sung by Boileau, in the epistle which he addressed to Racine "on the benefit to be derived from critics:"

"Imite mon exemple: et lorsqu'une cabale,
Un flot de vains auteurs follement te ravale,
Profite de leur haine, et de leur mauvais sens,
Ris du bruit passager de leurs cris impuissants.
Que peut contre tes vers une ignorance vaine?
Le Parnasse François, ennobli par ta veine,
Contre tous ces complots saura te maintenir
Et soulever pour toi l'équitable avenir.
Eh! qui, voyant un jour la douleur vertueuse
De Phèdre malgré soi perfide, incestueuse,
D'un si noble travail justement étonné,
Ne bénira d'abord le siècle fortuné,
Qui, rendu plus fameux par tes illustres veilles,
Vit naître sous ta main ces pompeuses merveilles."*

The years between 1665 and 1677, during which Racine was producing his masterpieces from "Andromaque" to "Phèdre," were also the years in which Boileau made his happiest efforts. The first nine Epistles, the Art of Poetry, and four cantos of Le Lutrin, the poems in short upon which his reputation chiefly rests, date from this period. In 1669 he had been presented to Louis XIV. by the Duc de Vivonne, and had recited to the King a part of that fine epistle, in which he exhorts him to exchange the barren glory of conquest for the more useful triumphs of peace. Louis, with the magnanimity which he sometimes showed, took the remonstrance in good part, presented the poet with a pension of 2000 livres, and encouraged from that time his attendance upon the court. The royal

* Épitre vii. vv. 71—84.

favour did not, however, prevent Boileau from cultivating the friendship of one who stood very low in the esteem of courtiers. A year or two after his presentation to the King, he met Antoine Arnauld at the house of a common friend, M. de Lamoignon, President of the Parliament of Paris. The poet, as we shall presently see, was no Jansenist, and yet no Molinist; but an honest man himself, loved honesty, and so was irresistibly attracted to Arnauld. The moral uprightness, the vigorous common sense, the freedom from scholastic prejudice, which distinguished the theologian, delighted the satirist, whose poetry, on the other hand, was as acceptable in style and matter as poetry could be to Arnauld's essentially prosaic mind. A friendship grew up between the two men who had thus so much in common: Arnauld, even when a proscribed exile, is never mentioned in Boileau's writings except in terms of the highest respect, and when in 1694 he died in Flanders, his friend composed, as his epitaph, some of the noblest and most vigorous verses of which French literature can boast.*

Shortly after the commencement of his acquaintance with Arnauld, Boileau, according to one account, with the assistance of Racine, wrote the famous "Arrêt Burlesque" against the introduction of the Cartesian philosophy into the University of Paris. The supremacy of Aristotle was menaced, and the University, following the precedent of a decree which had condemned Ramus in 1543, and another fulminated in 1624 against some less celebrated innovators, gravely asked M. de Lamoignon to interpose the authority of the Parliament of Paris to check the progress of the new doctrine. The President, in perplexity, applied for help both to Arnauld and to Boileau: the former indited a serious remonstrance against the proposed decree; the

* Conf. Stᵉ Beuve, Port Royal, vol. v. p. 327.

latter turned the whole affair into ridicule by an elaborate parody of a legal document, which, by banishing reason from the schools, ensures the perpetual supremacy of Aristotle. The "Arrêt Burlesque" was even more successful, as an engine of controversy, than the "Provincial Letters" had been, for the Aristotelians were laughed out of court, and the pernicious Cartesianism pursued its course unchecked. Among many passages of exquisite irony, those in which the mischief is attributed to the fact "that an unknown person, by name Reason, had undertaken to enter by force the schools of the said University;" in which the blood is forbidden to circulate through the body, "on pain of being entirely given up and abandoned to the Faculty of Medicine;" in which patients, cured of fevers by new methods, are ordered to be restored to a state of sickness, "to be afterwards treated according to the rules, and if they do not recover a second time, to be at least conducted to the other world sufficiently purged and evacuated" — will live in the memory of the reader, side by side with the raillery with which Voltaire pursued the unlucky Maupertuis.*

In 1673, Boileau proved his friendship for Arnauld by addressing to him his third epistle, "Upon False Shame." Two volumes of the great work "La Perpetuité de la Foi," which bore Arnauld's name upon the titlepage, had already appeared, and a third was still wanting to complete it. Boileau enters upon his subject by addressing Arnauld on the successful exposure of Claude's sophisms, and then assures him that, however convinced of the claims of the ancient church, a feeling of false shame will prevent the Protestant minister from acknowledging them. The epistle is, in other respects, not worthy of special remark: its philosophy is shallow, its versification level; but it is

* Ste Beuve, vol. v. p. 329. Œuvres de Boileau, vol. iii. p. 99, *et seq.*

another instance of Boileau's honest independence, and helps to explain how, when Racine wished to be reconciled with Port Royal, he was able to negotiate the terms of peace with Arnauld.

For the time had come when Racine could no longer continue his connection with the stage, and be at peace with his own conscience. The victory of Port Royal had been long delayed, but its hour had struck at last. In obedience to the poetic impulse, he had rebelled against religion, in the only form which had ever taken any hold of his nature: his success can hardly have fallen short of his wildest hopes; and yet Pradon and Le Clerc had taught him what Le Maître had learned, and would have taught him long ago, that the draught of fame is not of unmixed sweetness. The uncertainties, the intrigues, the quarrels of the stage were insupportable to his sensitive disposition; and Boileau's prophetic praise could not compensate him for an empty theatre, or a stinging lampoon. For disappointment to wake a sleeping conscience is no new thing; and we may easily admit that the stormy receptions of "Iphigénie" and "Phèdre" were predisposing causes of Racine's abandonment of the stage, without allowing that literary failure drove him into the arms of religion. And if the Protestant reader, remembering the perfect purity of Racine's tragedies, is disposed to attribute the silence of the poet to an inhuman austerity of Port Royal, and to ask why religion need have interdicted him from adding an Alcestis, an Œdipus, an Iphigenia in Tauris, to his other masterpieces, the answer is, that at this period the Church and the theatre were irremediably hostile to one another; that a Christian burial was with difficulty obtained for Molière; and that any ordinary actor, who would not confess on his death-bed that his course of life had been one continued sin, was contemptuously hidden under ground like a dog. Boileau

would have run the risk; would have spoken his soul in the dramatic form, if that had been natural to him, with a quiet conscience, and, dying, would have left the Church to avenge itself as it could. But Racine was made of tenderer stuff; and saw no halting-place between the Hôtel de Bourgogne and Port Royal.

His first intention was to bury himself in the Chartreuse, and expiate his theatrical sins by the rigour of that discipline. But his confessor, thinking perhaps, that in a character like Racine's, such a reaction was too violent to last, persuaded him that by contracting a respectable marriage, and thus undertaking the duties of citizenship, he would best overcome his unhappy passion for making verses. The step was no sooner recommended than taken. The repentant poet had his pension of 2000 livres, a valuable library, and enough ready money to pay the expenses of his wedding; and so, on the 1st of June, 1677, married Catherine de Romanet, the daughter of a provincial treasurer of France. "When he was resolved to marry," says his son, "neither love nor interest had anything to do with his choice; and in so serious an affair, he consulted reason only." It is satisfactory to think that a marriage arranged on these principles, made one of the most sensitive and affectionate of men, comfortable and happy. Before the year had expired, the King named him, in conjunction with Boileau, royal historiographer; assigning to the former a salary of 4000, to the latter of 2000 livres. Besides this, he received from the royal bounty, no less a sum than 3900 louis in extraordinary gifts, during the ten years which followed his marriage. There was therefore no want of the necessaries of life. His wife did not know verse from prose, and never was acquainted with more than the titles of the tragedies which had made her husband famous; but she was all absorbed in home and children, and ruled her household with admirable good sense. Seven

little ones — five daughters and two sons — soon filled the house; and their father, all courtier as he was, acknowledged himself happier with them, than at Versailles or Marli. Only when sickness came, and he had to pay the penalty of anxiety for love, he would say, "Why did I expose myself to this? why did they keep me from the Chartreuse?"

Racine's first care, after his marriage, was to seek a reconciliation with his friends of Port Royal. With Nicole, whom, as the author of the "Lettres Visionnaires," he might be supposed to have particularly offended, there was no difficulty; he went to him, accompanied by his cousin the Abbé Dupin, and was received with open arms. But Arnauld had been deeply and not unjustly hurt at the attack, which in his letter to Nicole, Racine had made on La Mère Angélique; and for a time did not respond to Boileau's advances on behalf of his friend. At last Boileau bethought himself of taking to Arnauld a copy of the "Phèdre." He found him surrounded by a company of young theologians, who began to smile when he undertook to prove that, apart from the influences of the theatre, a tragedy might be useful to good morals. Their smiles were turned into wonder, when Arnauld replied, "If things are as he says, he is right, and the tragedy is innocent." Boileau confessed afterwards that never in his life, was he so pleased as by this concession. He begged permission to leave the play with Arnauld, and returned in a few days to hear his judgment. It was entirely satisfactory; he admitted the soundness of the moral, only complaining, in common with many French critics, and I imagine but few English ones, that Racine had needlessly made Hippolytus a lover. From a favourable opinion of the play, to the pardon of the author, was an easy step; and the next day Boileau brought Racine with him. Although the room was full of strangers, Racine threw himself at Arnauld's feet; Arnauld, startled

from his wonted gravity, imitated the action; and a warm embrace sealed the reconciliation. From this moment to his death, the poet is once more the pupil, the servant, the friend of Port Royal.

It may have been the zeal with which he applied himself to the duties of his office as historiographer, which enabled him for many years to cultivate both his old and his new friendships, and to be equally well received at Port Royal and at Versailles. The place was not a new one; and was held, when Racine and Boileau were appointed, by an historian of some reputation, Mezerai. But the two poets had been long employed, with some coadjutors, who at a later period were incorporated into the lesser Academy, or Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres, in finding devices for the medals, by which Louis XIV. celebrated his victories, and in writing short narratives of the events which the medals commemorated. Madame de Montespan, by way of flattering her royal lover, proposed that for this plan, that of a connected history of his reign should be substituted; and Madame de Maintenon, who, though as yet only the governess of the mistress's children, was slowly acquiring her empire over the King's mind, suggested Racine and Boileau as the historians. It does not seem to have occurred to any one, that the historian's talent is not precisely that of the satirist or the tragic poet; that one who, describing in a pompous epistle, the royal passage of the Rhine, calls to his aid the River God, and a whole crowd of Naiads, is not on that account qualified to write a clear and vivid description of a military operation. So the poets set to work, and played at writing history for twenty of the best years of their lives. The only result is Racine's "History of Port Royal," which was assuredly not written by royal command.

Historiographers, who are courtiers too, are not bound to do more than follow the footsteps of their hero; and

Louis XIV. was a general, whose campaigns were easy to accompany and to describe. He affected to believe that the capture of a fortress, not the gain of pitched battles, was the true test of military skill; and with the help of Vauban, the best engineer in Europe, contrived to prove himself a great general. When, late in the spring, his marshals had made every disposition for investing some fortified place in Alsace, or in Flanders; when all the roads were open, and every opposing army was covered by a preponderating force, the great monarch would set out from Versailles with a brilliant retinue of courtiers, mistresses, valets, cooks, and sometimes poets, would assume the direction of a siege, the success of which, so far as human precautions could assure it, was already certain, and in a few weeks return to Paris in triumph as the invincible conqueror of Mons or Namur. On more than one expedition like this he was accompanied by Racine or Boileau, with no further result than some lively letters from the scene of war. The former especially was ill-fitted for any actual participation in the bloody drama which alone went by the name of history. When, in 1692, the King reviewed, at the camp of Gevres, near Mons, no fewer than 120,000 men, the joint armies commanded by himself and the Marechal de Luxembourg, Racine writes to Boileau: "I was so weary, so dazzled with the brilliance of sword and musket, so deafened with the noise of drums, trumpets, and cymbals, that in truth I let my horse carry me whither it would, without paying attention to anything; and I wished with all my heart that all the men that I saw had been each in his hut or his house, with their wives and children, and I in my Rue des Maçons, with my family." *

The relations of Racine and Boileau to the King are

* Œuvres de Racine, p. 517.

not easily understood by those who have never penetrated within the magic circle of a court. The first impulse is to set down much that they said to and of him to the account of interested adulation, and to mark with regretful wonder that such a contagion should have had power to affect such men. Three of Boileau's epistles — as well as another poem which differs from them only in title, the "Discours au Roi"—are addressed to the King, and are certainly not sparing in his praise. So the ode on the taking of Namur, so happily parodied by Prior when the town was retaken, is full of compliments, the more frigid and unnatural as the poet was essaying a species of composition for which he was wholly unfitted. But Boileau, in his published works, never praised with as little discrimination as Racine. When Thomas Corneille was received, on the death of his illustrious brother, as a member of the French Academy, the duty of pronouncing the panegyric of the latter devolved, by a happy chance, upon Racine. His praise was as high and as hearty as it ought to be; but at the end of the discourse he turned away from his subject to celebrate the virtues and genius of the King. Addressing a certain M. Bergeret, who shared the honours of the day with Thomas Corneille, he concludes: "Happy those, who like you, Sir, have the honour of drawing near to this great prince; and who, after having contemplated him, with the rest of the world, on those important occasions when he influences the destiny of the whole earth, can contemplate him again in private, and study him in the least actions of his life; not less great, not less heroic, not less admirable, than full of equity, full of humanity; always tranquil, always master of himself; without inequality, without weakness; — in short, the wisest and most perfect of men."* This was too much

* Œuvres de Racine, p. 464.

even for Louis to receive without a word of deprecation. "I should have praised you more if you had praised me less," he said to Racine, when the latter read the address to him in private. We may be sure that the King was not alone in the opinion implied by this rebuke. Antoine Arnauld writes from Brussels to Racine*: "I have to thank you, Sir, for the 'Discourse' which has been sent to me on your behalf. Surely nothing is more eloquent; and the hero whom you praise is all the more worthy of your praises, if, as they say, he has found them somewhat excessive."

Some of the extravagance in these terms is probably due to the complimentary tone which it would be necessary to assume on such an occasion, a tone to which the French language readily lends itself. But the private correspondence of Racine and Boileau shows that they really entertained towards the King a sentiment of respect, almost amounting to veneration. I will give but one instance out of many. In August 1687, Boileau was at the baths of Bourbon, hoping by their aid to conquer an obstinate affection of the throat. Racine writes to him: "The King asked me last night if you were come back; I told him no, and that the waters had not, as yet, given you much relief. He said to me these very words: 'He will do better to return to his ordinary course of life; his voice will come back when he least expects it.' Everybody is charmed with the kindness which his Majesty has shown to you in speaking thus; and everybody is of opinion that for your health you would do well to return."† To which Boileau replies: "I confess that if anything could restore my health and spirits, it would be his Majesty's kindness in inquiring about me every time that you present yourself before him. I hardly know what

* April 7th, 1688. † Œuvres de Racine p. 507.

more glorious thing could happen, I do not say to a wretch like myself, but to the most considerable people at the court; and I dare bet that there are more than twenty of them who are at this moment envying my good luck, and would willingly at the same price lose not only their voice but the faculty of speech." And then, after saying that the King's advice did not agree with that of the physicians at Bourbon, he continues; "I accept the omen which he has given in saying that my voice will return when I least expect it. A prince who has accomplished so many miraculous things is, in all likelihood, inspired by heaven; and all his words are oracles." * Yet to produce all this private and confidential adulation — if adulation it can be called which is not designed to reach the ears of its object — the King had done no more than ask after the health of an old friend and servant!

I believe, then, that the awe with which our poets looked upon Louis XIV. was not feigned; while any one who is familiar with the memoirs of that splendid court, will admit that there was nothing extraordinary in it. The social change which took place in the forty years subsequent to the wars of the Fronde, finds its only parallel in that produced by the forty years which followed the battle of Actium. In both cases a proud, fierce, ambitious nobility, every member of which was greedy for independent power and personal distinction, learned to hang upon the look of a single man, to obey his commands, to execute his projects, to rejoice in his smiles, to make themselves wretched at his frown. The description of Louis XIV.'s daily life, preserved by St. Simon, who as a Duke and Peer of France had the entrée to the sacred presence-chamber and corridors, is wonderfully instructive to the inhabitants of a free country. How from the moment of Majesty's rising in

* Œuvres de Racine, pp. 508, 509.

the morning to its going to bed at night, every action was regulated by inexorable etiquette; how its masses, its meals, its medicine, its consultation with ministers, its visits to mistresses, succeeded one another in invariable order and decorum; how one great nobleman had charge of the royal shirt, and another was honoured with permission to hold the stockings; how princes of the blood were suffered to sit at the King's table, at which lesser but still brilliant dignitaries reverently waited, while others were allowed to catch a glimpse of Majesty only in a passage, or upon a terrace; how duchesses intrigued and quarrelled for a stool in the presence, and everybody for the ineffable bliss of an invitation to Marli, whither, with a select train, the King fled when he was weary of the pomp of Versailles; all this and much more is told by one who saw it with a half-unconscious scorn, and yet mingled and thrust in the crowd which he affected to despise. Is it possible to form a true judgment of a King, "hedged about" by so much artificial divinity? And if hard for us, to whom Louis XIV. can give neither pensions, nor places, nor armies, and in whose eyes the memory of his victories, already tarnished by Blenheim and Malplaquet, is dull beside the fresher exploits of a greater King of France than he, how hard for those who had received much, and hoped for more from his favour, and who looked upon him as the impersonation of heroic success? His bounty had enriched, his personal friendship had distinguished Boileau and Racine; whatever honours and rewards could be bestowed upon literature, he had showered upon them; in an age of patrons, he was the noblest, the most generous, the most powerful of all. Nor was he then that Louis, who old, broken, childless, with his dynasty reduced to a single infant, and the prestige of his arms already shaken by William of Orange, maintained, with the exhausted resources of his kingdom, an almost hopeless struggle

against Marlborough and Eugène. His reign had been inaugurated by the victory of Rocroi, and forty years had but confirmed the omen. A crowd of great generals had arisen to command his armies; it needed only to serve Louis to earn a glorious reputation. Able administrators had filled the council chamber, over which no all-powerful minister presided, but the King himself, ever labouring for the glory of France. The old proverb had been reversed, and arts and letters had flourished in the midst of arms. And the monarch who was the pivot upon which all the vast machine rested, or seemed to rest, played to admiration the monarch's part, and if destitute of a kingly heart, had at least kingly manners. If careless of human life and happiness, his courtesy was unfailing, his dignity duly tempered by grace; if he often did a mean action, he often compensated for it by a magnanimous speech. Perhaps his valet-de-chambre knew that he was not a hero; I am not surprised that those who stood a little further off did not find it out.

Racine was a courtier at heart: his was one of those flexible natures which always seek a support round which to twine, and he sincerely loved and was grateful to Louis. But I fancy that he never quite caught the true court tone, and was too timid, too anxious to avoid all occasions of offence, to hit the medium between independence and servility, which pleases best, because affecting not to try to please at all. Something like this the King may have meant, when one day seeing Racine walking with his friend M. de Cavoie, he said, "Those two are often together; I can guess the reason. Cavoie, when he is with Racine, thinks himself a wit; and Racine, with Cavoie, imagines that he is a courtier." Boileau was far rougher; and if his ready wit enabled him to make sometimes the happier compliment, it as often suffered to escape some unwelcome truth. There is an amusing story told of Racine's

consternation, when, in spite of repeated warnings, Boileau persisted in alluding in the King's presence to Scarron, Madame de Maintenon's first husband, whose name, it was well known, neither she nor her royal spouse could endure to hear. Nor would he give up the independence of his literary taste. The King had written some verses, which he showed to Boileau. "Sire," he answered, "nothing is impossible to your Majesty; you have wished to write bad verses, and you have succeeded." And again, when the Prince de Condé disputed with him as to the merits of a sonnet, and alleged in its favour the opinion of the King and the Dauphiness, he said, "The King is expert in taking cities, and Madame la Dauphine is an accomplished princess, but I think I understand verses a little better than either." The Prince reported the retort to the King, who had the good sense to declare that the poet was right.

But not even Louis XIV., king, friend, patron as he was, could make the two poets ashamed of Port Royal, or silent in the praise of its great doctors. Year after year Racine was accustomed to take his wife and family to the quiet valley, where he had spent the most studious years of his youth, that they might pray with him at the old familiar altars. The King knew where he went, but after one of these absences from court, received him as graciously as before: there was a tacit compact between them in regard to this forbidden subject. Still Racine's supposed influence with the great ones of the court was often invoked by the nuns during the long weariness of the second persecution, and never invoked in vain. Boileau was not afraid to speak out. "The King," he said, "cannot inflict greater hardships upon the nuns of Port Royal, than they every day inflict upon themselves." A speech which he is reported to have made to Louis himself, is an ex-

quisite mixture of compliment and rebuke. "I am having every possible search made for M. Arnauld," said the King. "Your Majesty is always fortunate," was the reply, "you will not find him." So when Racine was reading to the King his friend's tenth epistle, addressed "To my Verses," he read the following passage with a manly emphasis; and the King made no remark: —

"Mais des heureux regards de mon astre étonnant
Marquez bien cet effet encore plus surprenant,
Qui dans mon souvenir aura toujours sa place;
Que, de tant d'écrivains de l'école d'Ignace,
Étant comme je suis, ami si déclaré,
Ce docteur toutefois si craint, si révéré,
Qui contre eux de sa plume épuisa l'énergie,
Arnauld, le grand Arnauld, fit mon apologie.
Sur mon tombeau futur, mes vers, pour l'énoncer,
Courez en lettres d'or de ce pas vous placer." *

The lines which I have just quoted exactly describe Boileau's position in regard to the great religious dispute of his day. He was one of the few men who had intimate friends among both Jansenists and Jesuits. He calls himself in one of his letters † a *Molino-Jansenist.* We have seen already how he provoked a Jesuit into a passion, by declaring that the "Provincial Letters" were the masterpiece of ancient and modern literature.‡ But Bourdaloue, Bouhours, Rapin, were his friends as well as Arnauld and Nicole; hardly less honoured and beloved. It is of them that he speaks in the following letter to Arnauld: §

"There are Jesuits who do me the honour to esteem me, and whom I also greatly esteem and honour. They come to see me in my solitude of Auteuil, and sometimes even stay there. I give them the best reception I can, but the

* Epistle x. v. 115—124.
† Œuvres, vol. iv. p. 336.
‡ Vol. i. p. 291.
§ June. 1694. Œuvres, vol. iv. p. 28.

first compact I make with them is, that I am to be allowed in our conversation, to praise you as much as I will. I often abuse this permission, and my garden walls have more than once re-echoed our disputes about you. The truth is, however, that they readily admit the greatness of your genius, and the breadth of your knowledge; while I maintain, in opposition to them, that these are your least qualities, and that what is most estimable in you is the uprightness of your spirit, the candour of your soul, and the purity of your intentions. It is then that they begin to cry out mightily; but I bate not a jot upon this head, any more than upon the "Provincial Letters," which, without examining which party is at the bottom right or wrong, I always vaunt before them as the most perfect prose work in our language. Sometimes we come to words that are quite sharp enough. At last, nevertheless, the whole thing ends in a joke; *ridendo dicere verum quid vetat?* Or when I perceive them to be too much annoyed, I expatiate upon the praises of Père la Chaise, whom I sincerely revere."

So, in his tenth satire, "Les Femmes," he praises by implication the training of Port Royal *; and then again has a similar word of compliment for Madame de Maintenon's little convent at St. Cyr.† If he wrote an epitaph for Arnauld, he placed under the portrait of Bourdaloue this couplet: —

> "Enfin, après Arnauld, ce fut l'illustre en France
> Que j'admirai le plus, et qui m'aima le mieux." ‡

In some men, this might have been the effect of timidity or time-serving: in Boileau it was the natural expression of his perfect honesty and independence of mind. There is nothing to show that he was either a Jansenist or a

* V. 125. † V. 364. ‡ Œuvres, vol. ii. p. 337.

Molinist. A foolish book has been published so late as 1857, to prove that the satire of Boileau's mock-heroic poem, "Le Lutrin," was all the utterance of concealed Jansenism — as if none but a Jansenist had a right to laugh at overfed priests and lazy canons! * It is true that Arnauld defended the misogynic theories of his satire on "Women:" that the epistle, "On the Love of God," — almost the last effort of his pen, — was warmly welcomed at Port Royal. He was an infirm old bachelor when he wrote the sarcasms which accorded well with Arnauld's theory of celibacy: and the doctrine of his epistle, that the love of God is a necessary test of the conversion of a sinner, was too truly religious not to offend the upholders of the sufficiency of attrition, and so to win the applause of their opponents. I figure him to myself as a man of strong sense and sound moral instincts, who did not care to take any side in a debate which seemed to him to be one only of words, but who loved goodness and hated injustice wherever he saw them. That Arnauld and Port Royal were persecuted was enough to draw out his heart to them; but when he saw that the supposed heterodoxy of their faith was accompanied by the undoubted orthodoxy of their morals, it made him their friend for life. And at the same time, his love for them did not prevent him from admiring the eloquence of Bourdaloue, or holding friendly debates of learning with Rapin, or maintaining amicable relations with Père la Chaise.

All the glimpses of Racine's private life in these latter years, which we obtain from his letters, or the memoirs of his son, reveal the same simple, kindly, sensitive character which we have already seen. In 1690 he obtained the office of gentleman-in-ordinary to the King, on condition of paying 10,000 livres to the widow of his predecessor;

* Conf. Ste Beuve, Port Royal, vol. v. p. 338, *note*.

and afterwards procured the reversion of it for his eldest son Jean Baptiste Racine. His tragedies were hardly a source of income; he made it a point of conscience not to revise them, and Boileau corrected the proofs of all the later editions. He was a child among his children; and however powerful the magnetism which drew him to Versailles, was never so happy as at home. "In the presence even of strangers," says Louis Racine, "he dared to be a father: he joined in all our amusements; and I recollect processions in which my sisters were the clergy, myself the curé, and the author of 'Athalie,' singing with us, carried the cross." In 1691, his eldest son went to Holland as the bearer of despatches to the French ambassador, Bonrepaux: and the numerous letters addressed to him by his father, as well as one or two sensible, motherly epistles from Madame Racine, are full of the little family details, which prove the existence of a good heart in those who record, and take it for granted in those who are to read them. The girls of the household, Nannette, Babet, Fanchon, Madelon, figure in them by turns, and are at least as interesting personages as the obscure courtiers who fill a similar place in some of his letters to Boileau. Three of these entered different convents; only one, the youngest, was married. At a time when Port Royal was again prohibited from receiving boarders, Racine had influence enough to obtain permission for two of his daughters to enter the convent; but it was soon revoked, and the eldest, who passionately wished to adopt the monastic life, under the care of her aunt, now Abbess, was sent home almost by force. An anecdote, interesting in its very simplicity, recorded by Louis Racine, paints, in a few words, the relations between his father and the family. He had just gone home from Versailles, when an equerry of the Prince de Condé came to invite him to dinner. "I cannot have the honour of dining with him,"

he said; "it is more than a week since I saw my wife and children, and to-day they are making a festival of dining with me on a beautiful carp; I must not disappoint them." The equerry insisted: the prince had invited a numerous company to meet M. Racine, and would be much mortified if he did not come. The simple poet answered his entreaties by showing the carp to the astonished officer, and appealing to him whether so fine a fish was not reason enough why he should dine with the children, and not with his Serene Highness. We are left to infer that Condé accepted the excuse.

If in these years Racine felt any regret for his former occupations and triumphs, his son is Jansenist enough not to record it. In one of his letters to Boileau, dated August 1687 *, I fancy that I trace some leaven of the old man. A troop of comedians had been turned out of their theatre by the Sorbonne, which had bought some adjoining property; and five or six attempts which they made to establish themselves elsewhere had been rendered unsuccessful by the curés of the different parishes. Port Royal would hardly have been pleased, I think, with Racine's evident sympathy with the "poor players," or his satisfaction at their prospect of a final settlement. In his conduct, however, he firmly adhered to the resolutions with which he had begun his new course of life. He neither went to the theatre himself, nor permitted his children to do so. When Madame Racine writes to her son in Holland, it is evidently with a secret dread that he should remember that he was the child of the author of "Phèdre," and take the opportunity of breaking loose from restraint. Racine's greatest fear was that either of his sons should become a poet; the eldest he studiously exhorted himself, the second, who was but a child when his

* Œuvres de Racine, p. 505.

father died, he left to the admonition of Boileau. The satirist faithfully discharged the commission; pointing out to the boy that a second Racine had as little chance of independent fame as Thomas Corneille, who was remembered only as the brother of a greater poet than himself. The lecture was fruitless; Louis Racine wrote some indifferent poems, which are long since forgotten; and founds his true claim to the gratitude of posterity on the affectionate and lively biography of his father, which he compiled for the use of his own son.

It was in 1688, eleven years after the production of "Phèdre," that a happy chance gave Racine the opportunity of returning to dramatic poetry, without offence to his religious convictions. Madame de Maintenon, who, since 1685 or 1686, had been the King's wife, and yet exercised all the influence of a mistress, established at St. Cyr, near Versailles, an institution for the education of poor damsels of noble birth. She herself, though of good family, had in early youth suffered the greatest privations, and now desired to make use of her unlimited command of the royal purse to succour a like distress. It is not necessary here to describe her foundation; it is enough to say that the wars and the splendour of Louis's reign had so impoverished the French noblesse, as to keep the roll at St. Cyr always full, though it extended to 250 names. The young ladies were taught, among other accomplishments, that of a clear and graceful elocution, and for this purpose were practised in recitation. From recitation to dramatic performance is an easy step, and Madame de Brinon, the first Superior of St. Cyr, composed a play for her pupils, the only merit of which was that it was written, committed to memory, and performed in a fortnight. Then some of the masterpieces of the French stage were tried, and at last "Andromaque" was played with such success, that Madame de Maintenon wrote to Racine, "Our

little girls have just acted your 'Andromaque,' and so well, that they shall never, as long as they live, play either that or any other of your pieces." In the same letter, she begged him to write a dramatic poem, on some moral or historical subject, in which there should be no mention of love. He need not fear for his reputation, for the play would be entirely confined to St. Cyr. It was not even necessary to observe the rules of the drama; the only object was to instruct, and at the same time amuse, a few young ladies. The request threw Racine into the greatest perplexity. He was too much of a courtier to refuse it; yet remembered how the author of the "Cid" had written "Agesilas," and "Attila," and feared lest the public should compare his latter days with those of Corneille. Boileau urgently dissuaded him from it, until Racine conceived the lucky thought of moulding the story of Esther into a sacred tragedy. Then he exhorted him to persevere with the same eagerness as he had formerly dissuaded him.

It is amusing to see the zeal with which Racine, conscience free, threw himself into his old avocation. He drilled his little troop, as he had formerly drilled La Champmêlé, and with the same good effect. For Madame de Caylus, the niece of Madame de Maintenon, who though not yet sixteen, had two years before been married from St. Cyr, he wrote the prologue, which she spoke in the character of Piety. The other personages, both of the play and of the chorus, were represented by the pupils of St. Cyr. One only is known to us, Madlle. de Marsilli, who first became Marquise de Villette, and then, by a second marriage, wife of St. John, Lord Bolingbroke.* The first representation took place at St. Cyr, on the 20th of January, 1689, before Louis and a brilliant court.

* Œuvres de Boileau, vol. iv. p. 42.

The success of the piece was prodigious; a second performance followed before a larger audience; then a third, which was attended by bishops, Jesuits, and pious people generally, who flocked to see a sacred tragedy, as many now rejoice in the religious novel. By and bye, the exiled King and Queen of England wished to see "Esther;" and the piece was repeated in their honour. To praise "Esther" was to compliment the all-powerful patroness of St. Cyr; who can suppose that it wanted praise? Courtiers intrigued for a seat in the little theatre, as for an invitation to Marli; and it is even said, that the King, list in hand, himself kept the door with uplifted cane, and admitted only the happy comers, whose names were duly recorded. The excitement photographed itself in one or two lively passages in Madame de Sévigné's letters *, and meanwhile the critics of Paris wondered what this dramatic marvel, which was so carefully hidden from vulgar eyes, might be. I do not find that it was performed upon any public stage till 1721, long after Racine's death. The publication of the play had already abated some of the vague admiration which radiated from the theatre of St. Cyr; and "Esther" never met with much success.†

And yet the enthusiasm with which, at its first appearance, "Esther" was greeted is easily understood, if we take into account the courtliness of the audience, the age and circumstances of the actors, the interest attaching to the new effort of a poet who, long silent, was yet a royal favourite. Racine had artfully availed himself of the assistance of a chorus, which not only helped to fill his stage with youth and beauty, but invoked, in aid of the piece, the resources of music. The critic, who reads the play without any of these helps to the imagination, is

* Jan. 28th; Feb. 7th; Feb. 21st, 1689.

† Conf. La Rochefoucauld, Études sur Racine, vol. i. p. 146, *et seq.*; p. 248.

forced to confess that the story is undramatic, and the interest feebly sustained; that the beauty of the choruses hardly compensates for the want of passion and character in the rest. At the time when it was first performed, many interpretations might be put upon the story. The supplanting of the haughty Vashti by the gentler Esther would recall to every courtier the succession of Madame de Maintenon to more than the honours of Madame de Montespan; while the Jewish origin of the heroine corresponded to the favourite's descent from the Huguenot house of D'Aubigné. Spectators asked themselves whether Haman was meant for Louvois, or if, in the character of Mordecai, no secret reference was made to Antoine Arnauld. And the verse *

"Et le roi, trop crédule, a signé cet édit:"

as well as these †,

"On peut des plus grands rois surprendre la justice,
Incapables de tromper,
Ils ont peine à s'échapper
Des pièges de l'artifice;"

have the true Jansenist ring.

Perhaps most critics will agree with Mr. Hallam, when he says, "The greatest praise of 'Esther' is that it encouraged its author to write 'Athalie.'" ‡ Madame de Maintenon demanded another sacred tragedy for St. Cyr, and the courteous poet applied himself with such goodwill to gratify her, that by the end of 1689, "Athalie" was ready. The success of "Esther" had been so great, that friends and critics contemplated the second attempt with apprehension. Speaking of "Esther," Madame de Sévigné says §, "Racine will find it difficult ever to write

* Act i. sc. 3.
† Act iii. sc. 9.
‡ Hallam, Lit. Hist. part iv. chap. vi. § 14.
§ March 21st, 1689.

anything so agreeable again, for there is no other story like that: . . . for Judith, Boaz, and Ruth, and the others which I don't recollect, cannot produce anything so fine. Nevertheless, Racine has plenty of talent; and we must hope." But "Athalie" was doomed to misfortune. The bigots had made a great effort; had represented the shame, as they called it, of training the daughters of French nobles into comedians; and Madame de Maintenon began to fear for the prosperity of her beloved St. Cyr. All was ready for the representation of "Athalie," when it was indefinitely postponed. Not till the winter of 1690-91 was it performed, and then only in Madame de Maintenon's own room, without scenery and without dresses. Racine never had the satisfaction of seeing the play, which his countrymen have almost unanimously pronounced his masterpiece, upon any stage. The second performance did not take place till three years after his death. Then, in 1702, the Duchess of Burgundy, the amiable princess whose gaiety and goodness threw almost the only gleam of sunshine across the sombre twilight of Louis's declining years, arranged a private representation in the theatre of Versailles, in which she herself took the part of Josabeth, and the Duke of Orleans, the future regent, that of the virtuous Abner. All the other characters, except that of Joad, the High Priest, were filled by amateurs of high rank. But it was not till, in 1716, "Athalie" was publicly performed in Paris, that its surpassing merits were fully recognised.*

Boileau was true to "Athalie" from the first. "It is your masterpiece," he said to Racine, "and the public will come round to my opinion." Arnauld in a letter in which he thanks Boileau for having sent him the play †, avows his preference of "Esther." But his praise of "Athalie" is

* La Rochefoucauld, vol. i. p. 174. † Œuvres de Racine, p. 652.

unreserved; and he admits that it is in theological, and not in poetical merits, that he thinks "the elder before the younger sister." Voltaire is said to have written of this tragedy, that it was "nearer to perfection than any work which had ever issued from the hands of men;" an enthusiastic estimate which is accepted, with more or less qualification, by many French critics. Racine himself preferred, on what grounds we are not told, the "Phèdre." That many celebrated actresses have agreed with the author in this preference, is not wonderful; the character of "Phèdre" stands out, in dramatic effect, beyond any other on the French stage; and so fills the mind, as to render it necessary to recall the life, the variety, the absorbing interest of "Athalie," before we can acquiesce in the general statement of the latter's superiority. The English reader who misses the true Hellenic spirit in Racine's Greek plays, will probably complain that in "Athalie" he has not risen to the height of the biblical poetry, and lament that he has thus invited a comparison, which it was impossible that he should sustain with honour. But the play is undoubtedly, with whatever errors and shortcomings, one of the noblest products of the dramatic art.

Racine survived his reconciliation with Port Royal twenty-two years, but "Esther" and "Athalie" are almost the only proofs of his poetical industry during that period. He did, indeed, celebrate the peace of 1685, by an "Idyl;" and composed for the use of St. Cyr, the text of four sacred cantatas, which called forth the enthusiastic admiration of Fénélon. He also drew from the recesses of his portfolio, his youthful translations of the hymns of the Breviary; and after due polishing and correction, published them in a book of devotion, called "The Christian Year," by Le Tourneux, a celebrated Jansenist preacher. The volume was condemned by the Archbishop of Paris, on the ground that it contained the service of the mass in the vulgar

tongue, and Racine once more drew back into silence. When Louis XIV. one day asked him to write religious poetry,— "I have tried once," was his answer, "and my verses were condemned." And yet it is hard to understand how a man, whose poetical genius was so natural and quick in its movements, and whose great works were produced in so rapid a succession, could have compelled himself to almost unbroken silence for so long. If Port Royal condemned the drama, the condemnation did not extend to every kind of poetry. Arnauld defended Boileau's tenth satire; and La Mère Racine thanked him warmly for the epistle on "The Love of God." Perhaps Racine was afraid lest the composition of verses in any shape, might lead him back by degrees to that life of the stage, from which he had emancipated himself so hardly, and to which, we cannot but believe, he still half regretfully looked back. Perhaps he was too much engrossed in that household drama, of which his children's ailments and happiness and dispositions formed the action, to have any sympathy left for fictitious heroes and heroines. Had the canons of taste, by which poetry was regulated, been not altogether arbitrary and unnatural, Racine might have left us domestic poems of his later life, not inferior in their kind to the tragic masterpieces of his youth.

It is to the latter half of Racine's life, that we must refer his "Abrégé de l'Histoire de Port Royal," although his biographer gives no indication of the exact time at which it was written, except the statement that it was composed with a view of removing prejudices against the community from the mind of Noailles, Archbishop of Paris. The first, and in some respects, the most valuable of that series of historical works of which the present is the last, it has almost the worth of a contemporary memoir, w ile preserving the breadth of view and unity of conception, which seldom characterise the notes of an eye-witness. It is un-

fortunately a fragment; the last event of the narrative being the captivity of the nuns in 1664. Nearly all the dramatic interest of the story of Port Royal is contained in the period treated by Racine; but his history would have been more valuable to his successors, if less perfect as a work of art, had it chiefly referred to those years of his own life, during which he was in constant communication with the monastery. The style of this little book is one more instance of the fact that a true poet's prose rises almost as high above the common level as his poetry. Boileau, we are told, regarded it as the masterpiece of historical composition which, up to his day, had been produced in France. To the lover of Port Royal it has a peculiar interest, as the true answer to Racine's own letter to the author of "Les Visionnaires." The respectful and tender admiration of his maturer years, may well be allowed to weigh against the petulant vexation of his youth.

Two equally strong, yet apparently inconsistent emotions divided Racine through all his later years: the love of the King, and the love of Port Royal. I have already given my reasons for the belief that the former was a genuine affection, excited first by generosity, and increased by long-continued kindness and condescension. The story of Racine's death seems to me to afford confirmation of this theory. He is usually represented as a courtier who died of a royal frown. I believe that he pined away beneath the coldness and unworthiness of a friend. That the friend was also a king neither justifies the unmanly sensibility, nor, on the other hand, makes it mean.

About the end of the year 1697—the time is somewhat uncertain—Madame de Maintenon engaged Racine in conversation upon the miseries under which the kingdom groaned. He did not hesitate to attribute them to the long wars; and grew eloquent in describing the measures of relief which might be taken by those in high places.

The great lady was, or appeared to be, charmed, and begged him to commit his thoughts to writing. The result was a memoir, in which he recapitulated at greater length, and in more logical order, the topics of his conversation. Madame de Maintenon was reading it, when the King unexpectedly entered the room, took it up, read a few lines, and then angrily demanded the author's name. We may well believe that whatever the paper said of the King's wars, was said in the most courtier-like fashion; but the subject was a sore one, the peace of Ryswick had just been signed, and Louis had acknowledged as King of England the rival with whom he had so long contended for European supremacy. Madame de Maintenon confessed with some reluctance that Racine was the offender: perhaps had not the honesty to avow her own share in the offence. "What?" cried the King, "because he knows how to make verses to perfection, does he think that he knows everything? Because he is a great poet, does he wish to be a minister?" Madame de Maintenon reported the royal anger to Racine, and bade him come to Versailles no more till he was sent for. The unhappy poet brooded over his disgrace, and after a time fell into a fever. From this he recovered; but an abscess in the region of the liver remained, which, though disregarded by the physicians, proved at last too much for his failing strength.

The exact sequence of these events is not easily distinguished, if we take the pains to compare Louis Racine's narrative with his father's letters to the brother in Holland. But the chief points of the situation, and the attitude of the principal actor, are quite clear. His health, never robust, was failing; he exaggerated the consequences to himself and his family of the King's disfavour, and refused to believe that there was any chance of its passing away. One day he met Madame de Maintenon in the garden of Versailles. She turned aside with him into a quiet alley,

and said (I quote from Louis Racine), "'What are you afraid of? It is I who am the cause of your misfortune; it is both for my interest and my honour to repair the evil I have done. Your fortune becomes mine. Let this cloud pass; I will bring back fine weather.' 'No, no, madame,' he answered; 'you will never bring it back to me.' 'And what,' she replied, 'makes you think so? Do you doubt my good-will or my power?' He answered, 'I know, madame, what your power is, and I know your kindness for me; but I have an aunt who loves me after a very different fashion. Every day that holy woman asks of God disgrace, humiliation, occasions of penitence for me; and she will be stronger than you.' At the moment he was speaking, the noise of a carriage was heard. 'It is the King,' cried Madame de Maintenon; 'hide yourself.' He took refuge in a thicket."

But a letter which he addressed to Madame de Maintenon, on the 4th of March, 1698, completely reveals his heart. His grief, his fear, his desire of reconciliation with the King, are almost unmanly, or at least appear so to those who do not own the aspirations, and speak the language of a court. But, even while defending himself from the charge of factious Jansenism, he will not give up Port Royal. "I learn," he says, "that I am represented to the King as a Jansenist. I confess to you that, when in 'Esther' I made the chorus sing 'Rois, chassez la calomnie,' I little expected that I should myself one day be attacked by calumny. I know that in the King's mind a Jansenist is simply an intriguer and a rebel to the Church.

"Have the kindness to recollect, Madame, how often you have said that the best part of me was my child-like submission to all that the Church believes and ordains, even in the smallest matters. I have written at your command more than three thousand verses on religious

subjects; I have assuredly spoken in them of the abundance of my heart, and have expressed all the sentiments which filled me the most. Do you recollect that any one passage has been found in them which even approaches error, and all that is called Jansenism? As for intrigue, who is there that may not be accused of it, if they accuse a man so devoted to the King as I am,—a man who passes his life in thinking of the King, in informing himself of the great deeds of the King, in inspiring into others the sentiments of love and admiration which he entertains for the King? I venture to say that great noblemen have sought my society much more than I have ever sought theirs but, in whatever company I have found myself, God has given me grace never to be ashamed of either the King or the gospel. There are witnesses still living who can tell you with what zeal they have often seen me contend against little vexations which sometimes arise in the minds of those whom the King has most loaded with his favours. How! Madame, with what conscience could I testify to posterity that this great prince did not listen to false reports against persons who were absolutely unknown to him, if I must needs have so melancholy an experience to the contrary?

"But I know what it is that may have given rise to so unjust an accusation. I have an aunt, who is Abbess of Port Royal, to whom I consider myself to be under infinite obligations. It is she who taught me to know God from childhood upwards: she, who was the instrument of which God made use to take me out of the lost and wretched condition in which I spent fifteen years. I learned, nearly two years ago, that she had been accused of disobedience, in having received nuns contrary to the prohibition issued against the community. I learned also that it was proposed to take their little property from these poor women, to maintain the foolish extravagance of the Abbess

of Port Royal de Paris. Could I, without being the meanest of men, refuse them in this necessity the little help that I could give?" And then, after stating his applications to Père la Chaise, and the Archbishop of Paris, with their results, he continues: "this is the whole of my Jansenism. I have spoken like these doctors of the Sorbonne, like these monks, and, last of all, like my archbishop. For the rest, I protest to you before God, that I neither know nor frequent the company of any one who is suspected of the least novelty of opinion. I live the most retired life I can in my family; and am, so to speak, in the world only when I am at Marli." *

The time had come, however, when Racine had cause to be ashamed of the King, if not of the gospel. Neither this nor any other remonstrance produced any effect, and he lay down to die. When it was too late, Louis showed some signs of repenting his unjust harshness, and sent more than once to inquire after the health of the sick poet. Hitherto his timid nature had shrunk from the thought of death: now, the courage with which he contemplated the end, showed that the end was near. One friendship at least he carried with him to the grave unbroken. I have already told how he assured Boileau that he deemed it a piece of good fortune to die first. Not many days before his death, he begged his son to write to M. de Cavoie, to ask, for his family's sake, prompt payment of the arrears of his pension. When he had read the letter, he said, "Why do you not also ask for payment of the arrears due to Boileau? we must not be separated. Begin your letter again, and let Boileau see that I have been his friend unto death." When these pecuniary arrangements were made, he prepared to submit to an operation which his surgeons advised, although he was perfectly

* Œuvres de Racine, p. 578.

convinced of its inutility. His presentiment was truer than their scientific foresight. Three days afterwards, on the 21st of April, 1699, he died, having completed his fifty-ninth year. His will was in more than one way characteristic. He secured the continuance of a pension, which he had long paid to his old nurse at Ferté-Milon. He left 500 livres to his indigent relatives at the same place, and 800 livres to the poor of two specified parishes. With the will was found the following document: —

"In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. I desire that after my death, my body may be carried to Port Royal des Champs, and there buried in the cemetery at the foot of M. Hamon's grave. I very humbly beg the Mother Abbess, and the sisters, to grant me this honour, although I acknowledge myself very unworthy of it, both by the scandals of my past life, and by the little use that I have made of the excellent education which I formerly received in that house, and of the great examples of piety and penitence which I have there seen, and of which I have been but a barren admirer. But the more I have offended God, the more I need the prayers of so holy a community, to draw down His mercy upon me. I also pray the Mother Abbess and nuns to accept the sum of 800 livres. Done at Paris, in my cabinet, the 10th of October, 1698."

Racine's prayer was granted, and he lay, as he wished, near his old friend and teacher. An epitaph, composed in Latin and in French by Boileau, was placed upon his tomb. When, in 1711, Port Royal des Champs was rased to the ground, the remains of Racine were, by special permission, saved from the general desecration, and transported to the Church of St. Étienne-du-Mont, where they were deposited near the grave of Pascal. The poet's widow survived him for thirty-three years, in the enjoyment of a pension of

2000 livres, which Louis settled upon her and her children. She and her sons are recorded to have tried to get rich in the time of Law, and to have lost the greater part of their property at the fall of that adventurous financier.*

A few words more will complete all that it is necessary to say of Boileau. Not many days after Racine's death, he took the news to the King. Louis was very gracious, and begged the poet to remember that he had always an hour a week to give him, if he felt disposed to come to Versailles. But the heartless way in which the King received his tidings was too much for him; he never went to court again. His friends in vain urged him to accept from time to time the royal invitation; "What should I do there?" he would say, "I can praise no longer." He grew old, and deaf, and solitary; shut himself up at Auteuil, where only a few friends of long standing came to visit him; and rarely attended the meetings of the Academy. Of the latter indeed, he might have spoken as he did of the court, for he had seen the great men of his time depart one by one, and he had forgotten how to praise. Between the age of Racine and Molière, and that of Voltaire and the Encyclopédie, lies a blank space, which corresponds with Boileau's last years. When Racine had abandoned the stage, he had written in sorrow:

"Et la scène Françoise est en proie à Pradon;" †

but on his death-bed he declared that the Pradons, whom he had laughed at in his youth, were "suns" compared with the poetasters of his old age. In an evil moment he was persuaded to sell his house at Auteuil, and retired

* The stone placed over Racine's grave at Port Royal, upon which Boileau's epitaph was engraved, had been long lost, till in 1818 it was discovered in the church of Magny, a village not far from the site of the monastery. It was taken to Paris, and placed in the church of St. Étienne, on the right side of the choir, opposite to the grave of Pascal.

† Ep. viii. v. 60.

to the lodging of his confessor in the cloister of Nôtre Dame. Here he died, on the 13th of March, 1711, making the poor his heirs.*

A literary estimate of the poets Racine and Boileau hardly comes within the limits of my plan, for Port Royal was chiefly concerned with the men. Racine's claim to our remembrance is founded upon poetical labours, which Port Royal disapproved and forced him to abandon; while Boileau, as we have seen, maintained a position of neutrality in regard to the peculiar doctrines and controversies of the community. It was not so with Pascal: except on the mathematical side, he belonged wholly to Port Royal; and only in connection with its history can his character and writings be fully understood. He was a part of our story, which would have been incomplete without him: the "Provincial Letters" gave a new direction to the debate between Jansenist and Jesuit; and his "Thoughts" took their origin, and unfortunately, their final form, at Port Royal. And, therefore, the literary disquisition which was necessary in his case would be inappropriate in that of Racine and Boileau. We must leave the French Virgil and the French Pope to the harsh or kindly judgment of the critics. If they be found unworthy of a place beside the great poets whose names I have borrowed for them, let something be allowed for the age in which they lived, and much more for the intractable language which they had to mould to the uses of poetry. It may seem strange to look for the type of a dramatic in an epic poet: and yet the comparison rises almost spontaneously in the mind. In Racine (I quote the opinion of native judges, better qualified than myself to form one) there are the same elaborate and finished structure of phrase, the

* For the events of Boileau's life, I am indebted not only to the Life of Racine, by his son, but to the Memoir of Boileau, prefixed to Daunou's edition of his works.

same sweetness of versification, the same spirit of half melancholy tenderness, as in the Roman poet. And if, on the other hand, Pope surpasses Boileau in many of the qualities of a satirist, if his couplets are more nervous and epigrammatic, his insight into human nature deeper and more various, his power of touching the heart far greater, and all the movements of his genius more rapid and more graceful, some weight of counterbalance must be allowed to Boileau's sterner, manlier, more consistent character, which persuades the reader that he has to do, not with a mere professional moralist, but with a honest, God-fearing man.

True friendship, like true love, depends upon a certain degree of accordant difference, of reciprocal complementary endowment, in those whom it unites. In marriage this is to some extent supplied by the natural dissimilarity of the sexes, where strength and tenderness, self-reliance and trust, virtues of action and virtues of endurance, are welded into one symmetrical whole. So the friendship between Racine and Boileau was a marriage of souls, in which the dramatist supplied the feminine, the satirist the masculine nature. The weakness, and perhaps in a dramatic point of view, the strength of the one lay in an almost womanly craving for sympathy. He perpetually submits himself to the guidance of others. He has not even sufficient strength of will to follow the bias of his own genius: he would have accepted any priory in Languedoc which Père Sconin could have found for him; and poet though he is at heart, can never shake off the old influence of Port Royal. Throughout his dramatic career Boileau leads him. He is unable to bear up against the cabal who support Pradon. In writing "Esther" and "Athalie," he is executing the commands of another; and when the King turns his back upon him, goes home to die. His perfect happiness with a wife who,

as her son tells us, did not know the difference between a masculine and a feminine rhyme, his absorption in all the petty vicissitudes of his household, and the readiness of his tears at his own or others' misfortunes, are features of the same character. Even a tendency to sarcasm, of which Boileau often complained, and which may be traced in his epigrams, and in his letters to Nicole, is not inconsistent with it. His hits are rather the thrusts of a clever, angry woman, than the hearty blows of a laughter-loving man; if I dare say so, have an element of spitefulness in them which interferes with the flavour of the wit. A more engaging side of the same type of mind is unveiled in his unfailing delicacy of thought and speech. Racine's works need no purification to be fit for family use. There is not a line, a phrase, a situation, which is not sweet and good. Surely the man who, in such an age as Racine's, and amid such a court as Louis XIV.'s, could write such innocent and wholesome poetry as this, and none other, must have been guided in life and writing by a wonderful instinct of purity!

Perhaps, if we had lived with them, we should have loved Racine better than Boileau, and respected Boileau more than Racine. For the satirist—the masculine one of these wedded friends—was a man who did right, less from any impulse of love, than from a sense of duty, not quite free from sternness and asceticism. He was witty, and made almost a profession of saying sharp things; but his epigrams had always a kernel of honest truth in them, and sometimes concealed an unexpected and graceful compliment. But if he said sharp things, he knew also how to do noble and kind ones. Madame de Sévigné said of him that he was cruel only in verse; and he described himself as having neither claws nor nails. When Patru, the celebrated advocate, was obliged by poverty to sell his library, Boileau not only bought it at a third more than the price

asked, but made it a condition of the purchase that Patru should enjoy the possession of his books as long as he lived. When at the death of Colbert, Corneille's pension was taken away, Boileau hastened to the King, represented to him that the great poet was old, poor, sick, perhaps dying, and offered, if the royal necessities obliged such a course, to resign his own pension in Corneille's favour. Nor are these the only stories of the kind. We have seen that he could be honest and outspoken even at court, and that at the last he showed a manly resentment of the King's conduct to Racine, by refusing the monarch's most gracious invitations. Even if, in his strongest and most sensible verse, he never rises to any over-mastering height of moral vehemence, his voice is always uplifted on the side of justice, and goodness, and purity; and the broad gulf between the satirist, and the vices which he upbraids, is ever clearly seen. But why should I attempt a portrait, which he has himself drawn with a few, simple, modest strokes? He is addressing, in the tenth epistle, his verses: —

> "Déposez hardiment, qu'au fond cet homme horrible,
> Ce censeur qu'ils ont peint si noir et si terrible,
> Fut un esprit doux, simple, ami de l'équité,
> Qui, cherchant dans ses vers la seule vérité,
> Fit, sans être malin, ses plus grandes malices,
> Et qu'enfin sa candeur seule a fait tous ses vices.
> Dites que, harcelé par les plus vils rimeurs,
> Jamais, blessant leurs vers, il n'effleura leurs mœurs;
> Libre dans ses discours, mais pourtant toujours sage,
> Assez foible de corps, assez doux de visage,
> Ni petit, ni trop grand, très peu voluptueux,
> Ami de la vertu plutôt que vertueux."

Pascal, Racine, Boileau, these are the friends of Antoine Arnauld and of Port Royal—two of them spiritual children of the community. The Jesuits, too, may claim the impartial friendship of the last: can the whole order, in the three hundred years of its existence, match the two first?

* Epistle x. vv. 81, 92.

BOOK IV.

FROM THE PEACE OF THE CHURCH TO THE FINAL DESTRUCTION OF PORT ROYAL.

I.

The Peace of the Church, though concluded before the end of 1668, did not comprise the sisterhood of Port Royal des Champs till their signature of the prescribed declaration in February 1669. I have already* narrated the immediate consequences of that event; the separation of the two houses, and the division between them of the conventual property; the permission given to the community to receive novices and boarders; the enlargement of the buildings; the election of Abbess du Fargis; the death of La Mère Agnes. The period of returning prosperity, which the friends of Port Royal mistook for the inauguration of a new and brighter era in the history of their house, lasted but ten years. The Duchesse de Longueville died on the 15th of April 1679; on the 17th of May the Archbishop came to Port Royal, ordered the confessors to withdraw, and once more forbade the reception of novices. From that period to the final dispersion of the community in 1709, the Jesuits, acting through the King and the successive archbishops of Paris, sought to accomplish by a long and harassing blockade the destruction of Port Royal which they had formerly failed to effect by sudden and sharp assault. Of the two chapters into which the present book is divided, the second will narrate this final and successful persecution; while in the first, we will make a brief delay among the scenes and characters about which the last gleams of peace and happiness at Port Royal are seen to play.

* Vol. i. p. 445.

But my tale, like a human life which has been prolonged beyond the ordinary limit, grows sad with the consciousness of loss, as it nears its close. Many of the conventual annals are accompanied by a Nécrologe; which, after the events of each year have been narrated, recounts the friends, the benefactors, the inmates of the house, who have been taken away by death, during its course. At first the list is short, and contains none but obscure names; about the middle of the century the reader is made to feel that the elder generation is passing away; till, as the years draw on, all of those about whom the chief interest of our story gathered, drop away one by one, and the expiring community is compelled to entrust its defence to unknown hands. And thus it is the necessity of the story which gives this last book the form of a catalogue of deaths. Nature did her work slowly and gently; for Port Royal, in spite of its austerities, has added a singular chapter to the annals of human longevity. It was perhaps well for the reputation of the house, that the Jesuits, fearing lest the King's death might snatch their prey from them, put a sudden and violent end to the lingering pangs of its dissolution. For thus they unwittingly saved it from participation in the obscure and undignified struggles, which characterised the last phase of the Jansenist controversy.

The Peace of the Church almost exactly coincides with the period during which an Arnauld held the portfolio of Foreign Affairs, and a high place in the King's esteem. This was Simon, Marquis de Pomponne, the second and favourite son of D'Andilly. The old man who had spared no pains to advance his son in the career in which he had failed to satisfy his own ambition, was rewarded by seeing him, in 1665, at the very time when the persecution of Port Royal was the hottest, ambassador at Stockholm. Hence he was recalled, in 1671, by an autograph letter from the King, informing him, in the most gracious terms,

that he was appointed Foreign Secretary, in the room of the Marquis de Lionne, and that his future fortunes would be his royal master's special care. For eight years he filled his high office with entire success, winning the King's good opinion by his ability and diligence, and conciliating that of the public by the modesty with which he bore his honours. At last an intrigue to effect his ruin, allayed for a time the mutual jealousies of his colleagues, Colbert and Louvois, who used every opportunity of poisoning the King's mind against him. Had it not been for his near connection with the Jansenist chiefs, they would hardly have accomplished their purpose, so convinced was Louis of the value of Pomponne's services. An almost accidental negligence on the part of the minister, was made the occasion of the royal displeasure: in November, 1679, Pomponne was dismissed, and his place was given to Colbert de Croissy, the brother of his rival. Still the dismissal was not disgraceful; before long the King sent for him from time to time, and even spoke to him on matters of business. At last, when in 1691, Louvois died, Pomponne was recalled, and once more invited to take a seat at the council board. The King added to the compliments which accompanied the invitation, the expression of a fear that Pomponne would find it irksome to see the duties of his old office performed by the rival who had supplanted him. He replied, as became a Christian and an Arnauld, "that his only thought was how best to serve his Majesty; and that, therefore, to make a good beginning, and remove, as far as in him lay, all occasions of jealousy, he would at once go to Croissy, inform him of the King's kindness, and ask his friendship." The overture was received as it deserved to be; and Pomponne, who, though minister, accepted no special employment, lived on the most amicable terms with M. de Croissy. After a time the marriage of Pomponne's daughter with the Marquis

de Torcy, Croissy's son and successor in office, sealed the alliance. And when in 1699, at the age of eighty-one, Pomponne died, he still, though an Arnauld, faithful in belief and life to the name he bore, enjoyed the full confidence and favour of the King. His eldest son, Nicolas Simon, Marquis de Pomponne, who held high diplomatic and military offices, died without male issue in 1735. In the second, Henri Charles, Abbé de Pomponne, who died in 1756, at the age of eighty-seven, the family of Antoine Arnauld, the advocate, became extinct.*

The character of Pomponne takes us back to the earlier days of the Arnaulds, before Angélique had impressed upon them the mark of her own stern and unworldly religiousness. He holds himself conspicuously above the moral license of the time: no accusation of treachery or reckless self-seeking attaches itself to his name. Madame de Sévigné and St. Simon are alike eloquent as to the merits of his character and the charms of his society. But he is no Port Royalist. He does nothing, indeed, to conceal or sunder the connexion between himself and the community: his daughters are the first boarders who arrive at the convent after the conclusion of the Peace. But if he is guilty

* St. Simon, vol. iv. p. 161, *et seq.* Mad. de Sévigné, Lettres, vol. i. p. 331; vol. iv. p. 433; vol. v. p. 67. Vie d'Antoine Arnauld, vol. i. Append. pp. 386, 389. The foregoing account of Pomponne's career as a statesman is given on the authority of St. Simon. It is, however, fair to add that Louis himself has left on record a much lower opinion of the value of Pomponne's services, and justifies his dismissal on the ground of incapacity. But the statement not only reads like an *ex post facto* defence of his conduct, but is inconsistent with the subsequent facts of the case. Pomponne fell at the moment of Louis's renewed hostility to Port Royal. Had he united the disqualification of incapacity to that of Jansenism, it is not likely that the King, whose religious prejudices grew stronger under the influence of Madame de Maintenon, and his own advancing age, would have recalled him to his councils, and overlooked the fact of his being an Arnauld, at the time when the pursuit of Antoine Arnauld was the hottest, and a persecution of impartial severity was directed against all his friends.

of no treason to Port Royal, he is equally destitute of any zeal in its defence. He cannot belie his name and take part with the Jesuits; but Port Royal, even in its extremest need, never ventures to approach the King through him. His sister, Angélique de St. Jean Arnauld, may have feared something like this; for when he enters upon his office, her thoughts, like those of her aunt at the consecration of the Bishop of Angers, are all upon the temptations, and none upon the dignity of the office. Her sorrow is heated into indignation when Pomponne tries, by the offer of employment, to tempt his brother De Luzançi from Port Royal to court. She parries the congratulations of her friends, and, in one case, that of Madame Perier, answers with a home thrust. "I cannot understand," she writes, "how your affection permits you to act so differently at different times. I have seen you in the greatest possible disquietude for your son, when the question was of his entering upon a hereditary office; and now you want to persuade me that it is your friendship which causes you so much joy, on account of the charge which the King has just given to M. de Pomponne, although there are few more important offices, or in which it is more difficult to render to God and to Cæsar that which is due to each, and not to suffer any human interest to share one's heart. Is it that you desire an eternal kingdom for your children, and are satisfied with a temporal good fortune for your friends?"* She was equally true to her theory of the religious life when Pomponne fell. Madame de Sévigné writes to her daughter†: "Madame de Lesdiguières has written to La Mère Angélique de Port Royal, the minister's sister: she showed me the answer which she has received; I thought it so beautiful that I have copied it, and here it is. It is

* Guilbert, vol. i. p. 528. † November 29th, 1679.

the first time that I ever knew a nun think and speak like a nun. I have seen many who are excited about the marriages of their relatives, who are in despair that their nieces are not yet married, who are vindictive, evil-speaking, selfish, prejudiced,—all that is easy to find; but I had never before seen one who was truly and sincerely dead to the world. Enjoy with me, my child, the pleasure which this rarity has given me."

D'Andilly was more sensible than his daughter to the honour conferred upon Pomponne, and, on a word of encouragement from the King, went to court to thank him for his son's promotion. The interview was highly characteristic on both sides. Louis, who had already admitted Antoine Arnauld to an audience, seems to have made up his mind to forget past prejudices and offences, and put on all the condescending grace which became him so well. But, while the great doctor had been content with such a respectful compliment, as was fitting from a subject to a king, D'Andilly trod the presence chamber with the step of an old courtier, and seemed to forget Port Royal and the Formulary in the exuberance of his gratitude and loyalty. He, too, cast many a lingering, backward look to the world, which his daughter, who is the true heiress of her aunt's uncompromising spirit, finds it hard to understand. The reader will remember that, when he first resolved to retire to Port Royal, his leave-taking of society was long and elaborate. When, in 1661, he was compelled to abandon his solitude, he chose to look upon Pomponne as a place of unwelcome exile. Still, after the Peace of the Church, the exile does not hasten home. Neither his daughter's half-concealed remonstrances, nor his sister's death, avail to draw him to Port Royal. Madame de Sévigné, in a letter dated April 29th, 1671, shows him as still engaged in his old vocation of saving souls that were inhabitants of beautiful bodies. "I set off tolerably early

yesterday morning from Paris, and went to dine at Pomponne, where I found our good man waiting for me; I would not willingly have failed to say good-bye to him. I found an increase of holiness in him which astonished me; the nearer he approaches death, the purer he grows. He scolded me very seriously; and, transported with zeal and friendship for me, told me that I was foolish not to think of my conversion; that I was a pretty pagan; that I made you an idol in my heart; that this sort of idolatry was as dangerous as any other, although to myself it appeared less criminal; that, in short, I ought to think of my own soul. He said all this so forcibly, that I had not a word to reply. In short, after six hours of very agreeable though very serious conversation, I left him and came hither." At last, in May 1673, D'Andilly tore himself away from the polished and amiable society which he loved so well, and, with his son De Luzançi, once more established himself at Port Royal. Perhaps he felt a fresh weariness stealing over his spirit, an increased feebleness conquering his limbs, and so bethought him that, if he would not die in the world, he must hasten to the desert. He survived the change little more than a year, dying on the 27th of September, 1674. Though he had attained the age of eighty-five, his mind was as bright, his heart as warm, as ever. I have tried, when speaking of his first retirement to Port Royal, to estimate his character *; it is enough to remember now that he was St. Cyran's chosen friend.†

Madame de Sévigné herself hardly comes within reach of our story; she is no more than the friend of our friends, and not even that in any theological or partisan way. The preceding pages have already enumerated her points of

* Vol. i. p. 213.

† Mad. de Sévigné, Lettres, Sep. 23rd, 1671. Ste Beuve, vol. iv. p. 406, Besoigne, vol. ii. p. 490. Guilbert, vol. i. p. 575.

contact with Port Royal; she is intimate with D'Andilly and Pomponne; she has the entrée to the Hôtel de Longueville; she admires the Port Royalist authors, and especially Nicole; she shows an active sympathy with La Mère Agnes in her imprisonment.* At the same time she has Jesuit as well as Jansenist friends, to say nothing of the great majority of her associates who are neither; and in the convents of the Visitation is revered as a "living relic" of her grandmother, Madame de Chantal. M. St^e Beuve aptly compares her to Boileau, and places her side by side with the great satirist as a friend of the community. Yet however tempting the occasion to speak at length of one who fills so peculiar a niche in the temple of French literature, it is needful to pass her by in favour of others who are more closely connected with our tale. A visit which she paid to Port Royal des Champs in January 1674, at once records her impression of the place, and introduces us to a Sévigné who is truly and wholly our own. She writes†, "I was six hours with M. D'Andilly; I had all the pleasure which the conversation of an admirable man can give; I saw also my uncle De Sévigné, but only for a moment. This Port Royal is a Thebaid; it is a paradise; it is a desert where all the devotion of Christianity has fixed itself; there is a holiness spread over all the country for a league round about. There are five or six solitaries whom nobody knows, who live like the penitents of St. John.‡ The nuns are angels upon earth. Madlle. de Vertus is ending her life here with inconceivable pain, and the greatest resignation; all their equipage, — even to the carters, the shepherds, the labourers, — all is modest. I confess to you that I have been ravished with the sight of this divine solitude which I have so often heard spoken of; it is a

* Lett. de la Mère Agnes, vol. ii. p. 185.
† Jan. 26th, 1674.
‡ One of the hermits of the Thebaid.

frightful valley, admirably adapted to inspire the desire of working out one's salvation."

Renaud de Sévigné, an old soldier, who had seen much service, betook himself, widowed and childless, to Port Royal about the year 1660, and, in implicit obedience to Singlin, sought to learn the secret of self-mastery. Long before, he had rescued from the sack of some town a little girl of three or four years old, who had been abandoned by her parents; had brought her up, and, when she was of fitting age, had placed her in a monastery. In requital of this charitable action, says the Nécrologe, Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, restored M. de Sévigné, himself a wandering sheep, to the fold, and giving him the opportunity of repentance for his past sins, placed him beyond the reach of new temptation. Some such thought had evidently crossed the penitent's own mind; for the Good Shepherd was engraven on his seal, and a painting of the same subject, which he afterwards bequeathed to the sisterhood, was among his most cherished possessions. In 1661, he built a house contiguous to Port Royal de Paris, where he lived in the simplest way, devoting all his means to good works, and the service of his friends. His is a singular and characteristic figure; a kind heart hidden under a stern military bearing; a life moulded by the rough liberty of camps, striving to accommodate itself to the uneventful religiousness, the lettered retirement of Port Royal. At the age of fifty-seven he learned Latin, that he might perfectly understand the offices of the Church. At one time De Saçi and Fontaine occupied apartments in his house, and employed their host in transcribing their works. The one remnant of luxury which he was unwilling to give up, was his carriage, which he retained, not for his own convenience, but for the use of De Saçi and his other friends of Port Royal. He was wont to walk in the garden of the Capuchins, hard by

Port Royal, with a great parasol over his head; and Fontaine relates, as a proof of his submission to his director, how he consulted De Saçi as to the propriety of allowing his servant to chastise the children who jeered at so strange a figure. His whole heart was in his new home and friendships. Once, when he had returned thither after a severe illness, and inquiries were made as to his health, he answered, that "his strength had begun to come back as he passed by the Institute, but that he felt himself perfectly well as soon as he set eyes on the clock-tower of Port Royal."

Yet, unlike Madame de Sablé, he did not hesitate to leave an abode so dear to him, when the Peace of the Church reunited the faithful community at Port Royal des Champs. He looked upon himself as the true knight of the sisterhood, bound to do them service in every possible way. At Paris he had been profuse of small kindnesses; here he found time to do a great one, in the enlargement of the conventual buildings of which I have before spoken. He died in the arms of De Saçi, on the 16th of March 1676, in the 66th year of his age, and was buried, in accordance with his own request, within the cloister. The monument which the sisterhood raised to his memory, gratefully commemorated his liberality to their house.

Another friend of Port Royal, whose name appears in the "Nécrologe" about this time, is Roger du Plessis, Duc de Liancourt; the nobleman who was refused absolution by the Curé of St. Sulpice in 1655, and who thus became the occasion of Antoine Arnauld's expulsion from the Sorbonne. Of him it is impossible to speak without speaking of his duchess, for his life is a tale of conjugal patience, and love, and fidelity. She was Jeanne de Schomberg; a daughter of that German house which gave more

* Fontaine, vol. iv. p. 226, *et seq.* Nécrologe, p. 115. St^e^ Beuve, vol. iv. p. 488.

than one famous general to the armies of Europe. When very young, she was married against her will to the eldest son of the Duc de Cossé; but the marriage was never more than a form, and before long she procured a decree declaring it null and void. In 1620 she was united to M. de Liancourt. He was twenty-two, she twenty years of age; the husband brave, dissolute, good-humoured, but not of brilliant ability; the wife clever, piquant, and scrupulously modest in thought and act. But Madame de Liancourt was not a woman either to harden her husband's heart by reproaches, or to requite his unfaithfulness with indifference; she bore all offence silently, and thought only of the way to win him back. Once she is recorded to have quietly paid for a present to one of his mistresses, the account of which had been brought to her by mistake. To detach him from his Parisian life, she employed all her inventive resource in adorning his country house of Liancourt. Its fountains and waterworks, which, till the King adopted a similar taste, were the wonder of France, are celebrated by Rapin in that poem on "Gardens," which the admirers of modern Latin verse sometimes place side by side with the "Georgics:"

> "Et quam mille modis Schombergia duxerit undam
> Nympha, loci custos."

The strife of love lasted eighteen years before it was crowned by complete victory. Madame de Liancourt had nursed her husband through more than one severe and infectious illness; but gained the day, at last, when a similar sickness seemed likely to prove fatal to herself. He was about forty when he finally gave up the court, and devoted himself to a domestic and religious life. We cannot clearly trace the steps by which he became connected with Port Royal; but we learn that he visited St. Cyran at Vincennes, and built a cottage at Port Royal des

Champs, whither he occasionally retired. And the ground on which he was refused absolution in 1655 was that his granddaughter, the sole heiress of his wealth and honours, was a boarder in Port Royal; and that the Abbé de Bourzeis, a notorious Jansenist, lived in his house.

Madame de Liancourt reaped the reward of her patient love in thirty-six years of happy married life. She gently ruled her husband; and deserved to rule him, for she was greatly his superior in intellectual ability and force of character. A work on education, which records the training of her granddaughter, Madlle. de La Roche-Guyon, is said to contain abundant proofs of her piety and good sense. The kindness of her heart shone through every action of her life. She became involved in a long lawsuit with her sister-in-law, the Maréchale de Schomberg. Nothing could be more distasteful to her peaceable and self-sacrificing disposition, and yet there was no help for it. So she took the utmost pains to keep on terms of private friendliness with her adversary; tried her best to procure an arbitration; and read through all the voluminous pleadings that she might strike out every word which her sensitive conscience deemed harsh and offensive. When Mazarin offered one of his nephews as a husband for her granddaughter, and proposed, in addition, to make her lady of honour to the Queen, she kept her husband, for whom the prospect was not without attractions, firm to his purpose of retirement, and declined all connection with the court. He, on the other hand, heartily admired and loved her; thought her theological friends the wisest and holiest of men; and accommodated himself, with some difficulty, to their notions of religious observance. He could make any great effort for God or man, but found it hard to tread the long round of prayer, religious reading, and meditation, which was prescribed for him. Like a man of business, he objected on one occasion to repeating

"Hallelujah" nine times in succession, and asked his teacher whether he could not come to the heart of the matter at once; though, when his wife was ill, he vowed to sell a valuable collection of pictures, in order to give the proceeds to the poor, and on her recovery cheerfully performed the sacrifice. He walked about Port Royal des Champs in a state of pious wonder; believed that prodigies of learning, holiness, and penitence were hidden under the rough garb of the convent-servants; and made a deep obeisance to every silent figure which he met. When Arnauld came to Liancourt, he entertained him on one of the monstrous carp which inhabited his stewponds, and were sacrificed in honour of only the most distinguished guests. After fifty-four years of married life, Madame de Liancourt died on the 14th of June, 1674. She had been long ill, but had striven, with the affectionate self-command which was a part of her character, to hide her ailment from her husband, who was also struggling with the last infirmities of old age. A fortnight before her death, she went from La Roche-Guyon to Liancourt, where she was to be buried, saying, "that there would be less trouble and ceremony in carrying her thither living than dead." Six weeks afterwards her husband followed her. For the first month he could speak of nothing but his loss; "then," says St^e Beuve, "he altogether ceased to talk, but continued to die of it." Part of the interval he had spent at Port Royal des Champs.

La Rochefoucauld, the author of the "Maxims," was M. de Liancourt's nephew, and is recorded to have said of him "that he spent all his money in physicians and was never well; in legal consultations, and lost all his suits; in good works, and was refused absolution in his parish." His granddaughter and sole heiress, was married to her cousin, the Prince de Marsillac, afterwards third Duc de la Rochefoucauld; but when she had borne him two sons, died only

a fortnight after her grandfather. It is interesting to hear St. Simon's testimony to the permanent influence of M. and Madame de Liancourt's virtues. The Duc de La Rochefoucauld was distinguished even in Louis XIV.'s servile court by his compliance with his master's wishes, but he never lost "the leaven of Liancourt." He spoke of them with unfailing reverence and affection; he never suffered any change to be made in their house and gardens; and though he had no sympathy with Jansenism, many of the persecuted friends of Port Royal found, as long as he lived, an asylum beneath the roof which had sheltered them in the days of the Duc and Duchesse de Liancourt.*

A second race of solitaries gather round Port Royal after 1668, most of them friends, whose first connection with the community is of earlier date, yet who now seem, as the original figures of our story drop away, to rise into new importance. One of these was Sebastien Joseph du Cambout, Abbé de Pontchâteau, who was noted in these latter years both for the rigour of his austerity and the energy and skill of his diplomacy on behalf of the party. He was born in 1634; the third son of Charles du Cambout, Marquis de Coislin, the head of a noble Breton house. In after years his own proud and somewhat morose humility delighted to pour contempt on his aristocratic descent and alliances; but the annalists of Port Royal own no such feeling, and magnify his ancestry with hardly concealed exultation. His grandmother was a Richelieu, so that he was a nephew *à la mode de Bretagne* of the two Cardinals of that great house, the Minister, and the Archbishop of Lyons. One of his sisters married the Duc d'Epernon, the other, the Comte d'Harcourt, Grand Ecuyer of France. Of his nephews one was Duc de Coislin, another the Cardinal

* Fontaine, vol. iv. p. 231, *et seq.* Besoigne, vol. iii. p. 49. Nécrologe, pp. 238, 292. Tallemant, vol. vi. p. 24, *et seq.* St. Simon, vol. xx. p. 143. Ste Beuve, vol. iv. p. 437, *et seq.*

Bishop of Orleans. The list might be almost indefinitely extended: but enough has been said to show, that any scion of such a genealogical tree would not be planted in a barren corner of the Church's vineyard. Long before he was of age, M. de Pontchâteau obtained, through the influence of Richelieu, three wealthy abbeys, and coming to Paris to pursue his studies, prepared to live the gay and luxurious life of a rich and worldly churchman.

He was only seventeen, when he fell in with one of the confessors of Port Royal, M. de Rebours, who was the means of bringing him into contact with Singlin. Young as he was, his ardent desires were all for solitude and penitence; so that, after a correspondence with the director, he went about the end of 1651 to Port Royal des Champs, when M. de St. Gilles, his neighbour in Brittany, gave him a warm welcome. But Singlin, with his accustomed insight into character, doubted the permanence of Pontchâteau's resolutions, and put off from time to time the period for their execution. The event proved that he was right, for in 1652 the would-be solitary suddenly set off for Rome with one or two companions of his own age and profession, and his desires of retreat were scattered to the winds. Next year he returned to renew his wayward intercourse with the patient confessors. For three or four years he was, and was not, one of the solitaries of Port Royal. He retired thither more than once, and quitted it with the rest in 1656. He made presents of relics to the sisterhood, and, like M. de Sévigné, held his carriage and horses at their disposal. He undertook to draw up an accurate account of the miracles of the Holy Thorn. But he never went so far as to resign his benefices, and in 1658, astonished and grieved his friends by a second sudden journey to Rome.

The story of M. de Pontchâteau's changes of purpose is hard to disentangle from the somewhat confused statements

of the memoirs; and probably connot be narrated with perfect accuracy. He returned from Rome after a few months, and for the next four years wavered between his worldly life and Port Royal. Singlin bore patiently with the inconstancy of his penitent; now hopefully noting a more serious and self-reproachful tone of mind, now gently reproving a relapse into the old carelessness and self-indulgence. At last even he began to grow weary; and told Pontchâteau that the life of the solitaries of Port Royal was not fit for him, and that if he were sincere in his purposes of retirement, he ought to betake himself to a monastery, where the severity of a fixed rule might remedy his inability of self-control. But the decisive moment was nearer than perhaps either the confessor or the penitent dreamed. On Good Friday, 1663, twelve years after Pontchâteau's first attraction to Port Royal, Singlin said to him, "You will not then quit the life which you lead?" Pontchâteau replied that "he was willing enough, but not yet able." Singlin answered, "Do not say that you cannot, but say that you will not." The penitent at once went away with these words ringing in his ears; meditated upon them all night, and then, rising from a sleepless bed at four o'clock, put his resolution beyond the power of recall. He resigned his benefices, wrote one or two letters, and disappeared out of sight and reach of his family, into some obscure hiding-place. With the exception of his sister, the Duchesse d'Epernon, who also retired to a convent, he never saw any of his kinsfolk again.

The sternness of his austerity was in proportion to his long hesitation between the world and Singlin. His costly furniture, his pictures, his other works of art, quickly disappeared: his splendid and valuable library was gradually transferred to the shelves of Arnauld, as the man best able to use it. He abandoned even his name, as if it reminded him too powerfully of days that he would willingly forget;

and in his negotiations and journeys, was known by many varying appellations. Port Royal des Champs was now closed to him, as to all the solitaries: but the directors of the party, conscious, perhaps, that his new born zeal would be best sustained by action, provided him with employment. In 1664 he went as a sort of commercial or legal agent to Nordstrandt, an island upon the coast of Holstein. Many of the Port Royalist leaders had made over their property to the community, on condition of receiving from it annuities after a certain rate. When the affair of the Formulary placed the whole of the conventual possessions in jeopardy, the nuns honourably and thoughtfully cancelled all these agreements; and some of their friends, especially Arnauld and Nicole, misled by the Dutch Jansenists, invested their money in a draining and embanking scheme in the above island. The speculation, if such it can be called, was unsuccessful, and would not be worth mentioning in this place, had it not given rise to a report that the Jansenists were preparing for themselves an asylum in the far north, where they intended to establish a republican constitution and an Augustinian church. M. de Pontchâteau's first mission was to rescue what he could from the hungry waves which washed over Nordstrandt; his second, to take De Saçi's New Testament to the Elzevirs' printing office at Amsterdam. But as soon as the peace of the Church gave opportunity, he hastened to Port Royal des Champs, as the home to which all his desires had long turned.

Here, under the name of M. Mercier, he lived at Les Granges, and tilled the convent garden. Nor was his an amateur horticulture, as we cannot but suspect D'Andilly's to have been. He laboured with his own hands from morning to night, clad in the coarsest raiment, which he did not take off when he exchanged his work for his bed of straw. He wore a hair shirt, and sometimes, in ad-

dition, an iron girdle next his skin. He did not choose to be looked upon as a nobleman in disguise, but behaved, and desired to be treated, in every respect like a common day labourer. Sundays and feast days he spent in the convent church, going through the whole round of prayer prescribed by the ritual, or allowing himself from time to time some relaxation of reading or writing. He shrunk from no work, however laborious or disagreeable; and, when any death took place, himself dug the grave, and committed the body to the earth. He moved among his companions with pious indifference, silent and self-absorbed; showing neither preferences nor dislikes. Fontaine commemorates the neatness of his work: not a weed was to be seen in his beds, not a herb was out of its place; but it was "a penitent's garden," where all the plants were chosen not for beauty, but for use. To have been able to gather a nosegay there would have been an unworthy condescension to the senses. So too we learn, from a letter to his sister, that he would have been annoyed had the worship of Port Royal been notable for musical excellence: "music," he says, "would ill-become the daughters of St. Bernard." It is this moroseness, rather than the rigour of M. de Pontchâteau's austerity, which distinguishes him among the solitaries of Port Royal.

He was, however, called to doff his gardener's jacket before the death of Madame de Longueville gave the signal for renewed persecution. In 1677, he went a third time to Rome as an envoy from the Bishop of Alet, now involved in the affair of the Régale, to Innocent XI.; a fourth time in 1679, to represent the interests of Port Royal at the Holy See. For the last ten years of his life he was a wanderer. Sometimes he is with Arnauld in Brussels, then suddenly in Paris, then pays a brief and secret visit to Port Royal. After 1685, his home was the

Abbey of Orval, in Luxembourg, where he lived as a boarder; but tilled the garden, shared all the austerities of the house, and carried himself as the meanest and least worthy of the community. His name and history were known only to the Abbot; to the rest of the monks he was M. Fleury, a stranger who seemed to delight in feats of self-mortification, and excesses of humility. But his activity in the cause of Port Royal was in no degree abated; and the years of his so-called residence at Orval are a period of constant journeyings to and fro.

In the spring of 1690 he came to Paris, where on the 20th of June he was taken ill, and died after a week's sickness. He maintained to the last the attitude of aversion to his family, which he had adopted on his final retirement to Port Royal. He had been accustomed to repeat the words of Job; "I have said to corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister." About a fortnight before his last illness, as he knelt in the Cathedral of Notre-Dame, before a shrine of the Virgin, he saw by his side a young ecclesiastic, in whom he traced some likeness to his own family, and who was indeed, his great nephew the Abbé de Coislin, afterwards Bishop of Metz. His surmise was confirmed by the sight of an attendant in the well-known livery; he instantly rose without speaking, and finished his devotions elsewhere. So when he was dying, he sternly refused to see his nephew, the Duc de Coislin, who had sought him out, and earnestly entreated to be allowed to watch by his bedside. At last, when he could no longer protest, Madame de Coislin and one or two other ladies were admitted to the mean room in which he lay; and kneeling at the foot of the bed, watched, through an opening in the curtain, the last unconscious struggle. I know not what sight should more justly call forth the indignant exclamation of the old Roman poet philosopher, —

"Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum,"

than this sad yearning of womanly love to fulfil all offices of tenderness, sternly repelled in the name of Christian faith, and forced to content itself with those long hours of secret, tearful, helpless watching. There is little in the picture of M. de Pontchâteau left by his biographers which helps us to love him; but this eager proffer of affection at the last by those whom he had so utterly cast off, seems to prove that there had once been something amiable in his character. One nephew, the Duc de Coislin, attended him to his grave at Port Royal; another, nine years afterwards, was laid by his side.

Nicole, who witnessed Pontchâteau's death, writes of him:—"The malady of which he died seized him at my lodging, after a conversation which lasted two hours. I had the happiness to see him during his illness, and even to be present at the sacrifice of his death, which I confess was such as I should desire for myself, without éclat, without turmoil, in perfect peace, entire self-possession, and unintermitted reliance upon God; like the sequel of a life, which, tending all towards death, did not need to be marked by peculiar circumstances, but only to continue in the same state. For the rest, I confess to you, that I lay no great stress upon the concourse of people at his grave, nor upon the miracles which are attributed to him. I do not even know whether they are real."* I have quoted this passage as the calm protest of the earlier generation of Jansenists, against the superstitious follies of the younger. When the people of the quarter heard that a duke's brother had died in his humble lodging, worn out by austerity, and so weaned from the world, as not even to see his kinsfolk, their inflammable imagination took fire,

* Nicole. Lettres, Essais de Morale, vol. viii. p. 194.

and they exclaimed that he was a saint. A scrofulous girl was cured by the touch of the corpse; what further proof was necessary? There was a wild rush for relics of the newly discovered saint; a great concourse as his funeral procession passed to Port Royal. The annalists turn round in angry scorn upon Nicole for his doubt; but the impartial student marks with pain that Jansenism is one step nearer to the disgusting miracles of the Convulsionnaires.*

We cannot altogether leave behind us the period of the community's deepest distress, and the few years of prosperity which followed it, without dwelling upon the life and character of Jean Hamon, the good physician, who, when all spiritual help was denied, endeavoured to minister to the ills of both body and soul. He realised in himself the phrase which he loved to apply to the Evangelist, "*Lucas bis medicus.*" He unites many claims to our notice. His life was passed in less broken intercourse with Port Royal than those of some of its more conspicuous champions; for the physician was more than once permitted to remain when the confessors were sent away. But he was the mystic, as well as the physician of Port Royal. The conjunction at first sight seems strange: for the reproach usually uttered against medical science, that it dulls the spiritual perceptions, and disturbs the boundary between the seen and the unseen, to the advantage of the former, is not always undeserved. Nor is the Augustinian theology favourable to the production of mystics; the essential condition of mysticism is the possibility of free communion between the finite and the infinite spirit: it cannot breathe except in a region of per-

* Recueil d'Utrecht, Relation pour servir à la Vie de M. de Pontchâteau, p. 410, *et seq.* Nécrologe, p. 254. Du Fossé, pp. 132, 393. Fontaine, vol. iv. p. 371, *et seq.* Besoigne, vol. iv. p. 601, *et seq.* St^e^ Beuve, vol. v. p. 99, *et seq.*

fect liberty of choice and affection on the side of both God and man; while the system of the great Latin father, and still more that of his Genevese disciple, freezes the possibilities of Providence into a "divine economy," and binds down all impulse by the chains of inexorable necessity. So we notice that the mysticism of France in the seventeenth century, passed by Port Royal, to develop itself in the quietism of Madame Guyon and the Archbishop of Cambrai: as in England, it attached itself, not to the more or less consistent Calvinism of the Puritan leaders, but to the Arminian theology of Fox and Barclay. Whence then the source of Hamon's mysticism?

The truth is that mysticism always has its root in personal character. It begins on the religious, not on the theological side: it is an aspiration reduced to theory, not a theory which gives birth to aspiration. There are some forms of theology with which it allies itself more naturally than with others; probably none in connection with which it does not sometimes manifest itself. It is a phase of personal religion, to which it stands in the same relation as the lightest aërial vapour to the water from which it arose, and into which it is capable of being condensed. There have always been men and women, who, seizing upon the idea of communion with God as the centre point of theology, have dwelt upon it to the exclusion of almost every other. The laws which regulate the intercourse of similar spiritual natures, are obscure, and little susceptible of definition: what wonder then, if those who strive towards the consummation of union with the Infinite Spirit, should be ill able to express all they seem to themselves to feel, much less to reduce the rapturous experience to the definite proportions of a system? A darkness, athwart which but few rays of light are seen to glance, — a perplexity, the clue through which rarely appears, and is lost almost as soon as seen, — are the neces-

sary characteristics of mysticism. If the mystic is led astray by no phantoms of the imagination, and speaks in truth and soberness only that "which he doth know," he stands face to face with a reality which human powers can only imperfectly apprehend, and his speech, to be true, must be broken and obscure. So men are born mystics, and fulfil the promise of their birth, in spite of any obstacle which systems of theology may interpose. They have a faculty of seeing God, as other men have a keen eye for niceties of form and subtleties of colour. They make their very hindrances into stepping stones: some, whose work lies among the tangible realities of nature, see in every one the expression of some supersensual truth or relation; others, like all Roman Catholic mystics, convert the symbols and sacraments, which seem to interpose between the soul and God, into types of the ineffable union which exists between them. They speak a language of their own, which is not only unintelligible, but absurd to those who are not familiar with its tones, yet which binds them all, of whatever church or age, into a secret brotherhood. Men idly convert their common name into a term of reproach, forgetting that those who habitually contemplate and strive to express the mysterious realities, which transcend all human thought and speech, must needs be mystics. Meanwhile, none are so careless of earthly reproach, for they stand in the presence of God.

Jean Hamon was a native of Cherbourg, where he was born about 1617. We know little of his earlier life, for the unfinished autobiography, which he wrote on the model of the Confessions of St. Augustine, is a record rather of feelings than of facts.* He was carefully educated in the schools of his native province, and, coming to the capital to complete his studies, became tutor of M. de Harlay,

* Relation de plusieurs circonstances de la Vie de M. Hamon, faite par lui-même sur le modele des Confessions de S. Augustin, 1734.

afterwards President of the Parliament of Paris. He took his degree in the Faculty of Medicine, and was beginning practice with a fair prospect of success, when his thoughts, we know not how, were turned in the direction of the religious life. Two years of indecision followed, during which his director was the curé of his parish, a worthy priest, who, at the end of that period, transferred his intractable penitent to the more skilful hands of Singlin. The first thought was to send him to the Chartreuse: then came M. de Harlay with the offer of a benefice, which Hamon might use for purposes of religious retirement, or otherwise as he chose. But the penitent's secret wish was to join the hermit community at Port Royal des Champs; and thither, at the end of 1649, or the beginning of 1650, he was sent.

Before his final retirement he sold his patrimony, and employed the proceeds in almsgiving. On his first arrival at Port Royal he applied himself to agricultural labour; then, after a time, was selected to assist Antoine Arnauld. But on the death of M. Pallu in 1651, he succeeded to the office of physician to the solitaries, as well as to the nuns, who under La Mère Angélique had now returned to the monastery. At first he was far from popular. He entertained a high conception of the dignity of his art; and added to the professional gravity of an able physician, the severe silence of a true penitent. Some of the solitaries had found their trifling ailments an agreeable occasion of talk with the gayest and most cheerful of hermits, M. Pallu *; but this was all over now. "As soon as they opened their mouths," says Fontaine †, "according to the liberty which had been always enjoyed in the time of the defunct, to make some good humoured statement, and to try to bargain about some new bleeding or purging, — of

* Conf. vol. i. p. 206.

† Mémoires, vol. iii. p. 60.

which he was very liberal, sparing blood as little as senna, — they beheld a deaf and inflexible man, who, assuming a serious air and a grave tone, brought to bear upon them his degree of Doctor of Medicine, and the 4000 livres which it had cost. To this there was no reply; but while he was obeyed, it was not the less regarded as a petty yoke which it would be very pleasant to throw off." To make the matter worse, there were rivals in the field. D'Andilly sent to Paris for a M. Duclos, the possessor of some miraculous pills; the Duc de Luynes patronised M. Jacques, who cured all diseases with an infallible powder. The strife waxed great; pills and powders were extolled in rivalry at every bedside; and Hamon, nothing loth, was left to the solitude of his own chamber, and the care of the sick peasants, through a circuit of six or seven leagues round Port Royal. He alludes thus quietly to his unpopularity*: "The course which I took during all these little disturbances, was to resolve upon silence, which is an innocent remedy, and spoils nothing. . . . I should have been glad to be deaf; but at least I tried to be dumb, and thought only of healing those sicknesses which can be healed by prayer. I saw that God asked me to account for the use of no other remedy than this, which ought to be employed by all His members for the perfect cure of the whole body. So far we ought all to be physicians; beyond this, I myself am none." It is difficult to quarrel with a man who will neither take, nor requite offence; the solitaries learned in a little time to appreciate both his medical skill, and his true and noble character. De Saçi exercised throughout his function of wise, kind, gentle mediation, and before long Hamon was universally recognised, like the evangelist with whom he delighted to compare himself, as "the beloved physician."

* Autobiography, p. 13.

Meanwhile he was not backward in practising the austerity which was the rule of life at Port Royal. He lodged in a garret, where, winter and summer, he allowed himself no fire. He lay upon a board, which, to elude observation, he had concealed in his bed. Every day he rose at one, that he might be ready to join in the matins which the nuns celebrated at two o'clock; and then, to drive away sleep, spent the rest of the morning in writing. In dress he was not distinguishable from the neighbouring peasants; while his principal food was a coarse bread made of bran, such as was usually given to the dogs. He was assiduous in study, learning Italian and Spanish for the same purpose as St. Jerome learned Hebrew, to rid himself of haunting temptation. He liked to have something to occupy his hands while he was reading, and so was wont to knit. Throughout his life, he held himself at the service of the poor, and was well known in every village within many miles of Port Royal. At first he made all his journeys on foot, taking his Bible with him; afterwards, when so long a round was too much for his failing strength, he went on his errand of mercy, mounted on an ass, and still reading his Bible, which rested on a little desk fitting into a hole in the saddle. We have already seen how high an importance he attached to prayer, as a necessary accompaniment to the exercise of his art. "Thus," he says *, "I always had recourse to God, quietly saying to Him in the midst of my rounds, among the rain, the wind, and the storms; *Nisi Dominus sanaverit ægros, frustra laborant, et qui curant, et qui curantur.* 'If the Lord have not healed the sick, both they who cure, and they who are cured, labour in vain.' To which I added this passage of Scripture, which is of infinite value:—*Confiteor tibi quia neque herba, neque malagma sanavit eos qui aliquando sanati sunt; sed tuus, Domine, sermo qui sanat omnia.*†

* Autobiography, p. 16.

† Wisdom of Solomon xvi. 12.

'For it is neither herb nor mollifying ointment that restored them to health, but Thy word, O Lord, which healeth all things.' And then I ended with these words: *Tu solus es Medicus, quo curante nemo moritur, quo non curante, nemo vivit.* 'Thou alone art the Physician, with whose care no man dies, without whose care no man lives.'" *

Though Hamon, as I have said, hardly ever left Port Royal from the time of his first retirement to his death, he was often assailed by scruples of conscience as to his right to remain there. He was too happy in the rude life which we have described; he sighed for a more complete retreat, a more severe self-mortification. Two years after he came to Port Royal, he was with some difficulty dissuaded from burying himself in the Chartreuse; and the same desire returned at different intervals, to be repressed by the use of the same arguments and authority. But, before long, the troubles of the monastery for ever bound Hamon to its fortunes; and he lived to rejoice that he had not listened to what he learned to consider as a temptation. In his quality of physician to the community he evaded the royal mandates for the dispersion of the solitaries in 1656 and 1661, and retired only in 1664, when a *lettre-de-cachet*, directed against him by name, was issued. His absence, however, lasted no more than nine months. Sickness multiplied so rapidly among the nuns, who were worn out by persecution, and deprived of fresh air and exercise, that the services of a skilful physician became necessary, while only one, who was bound by some ties of love and gratitude to the imprisoned community, would undertake so thankless a task.† So Hamon came back, and shared the four years' imprisonment. With the nuns, he endured the petty persecutions of the confessors; and had his own trial in the coarse familiarity

* Conf. Du Fossé, p. 110. Besoigne, vol. iv. pp. 249—251.

† Vol. I. p. 409.

of the guard, and the spectacle of misery, which he could only ineffectually relieve. Five sisters died during this period, debarred from the last sacraments of the Church, and buried without its blessing. The good physician was a layman, and therefore could not stand by the bedside in the place of an ordained priest; but all that love and prayer could do for those who voluntarily braved this last and most deadly peril for truth's sake, he did. "When it is necessary," he said, in sublime disregard of his ecclesiastical theory, "to perform the last duties to a dying person, all the faithful become ministers of God."

While Hamon was thus compelled to occupy, as far as possible, the place of the exiled confessors, he wrote for the use of the nuns a number of short treatises, bearing upon the peculiarities of their position. These little works, though not the production of one who had made authorship a profession, are full of a tender fancy which is not common at Port Royal, and which helps to give Hamon a position of his own among its writers. Endeavouring to console the nuns for their enforced isolation, he says, "We love our brethren in every place where it is possible to receive the Holy Spirit; and we are united to them, wherever we love them. The little space which exists between the strings of a lute does not prevent them from sounding at the same moment, or from concurring in the production of the same harmony, and in the gratification of our ears. When these strings are no longer stretched, and touch one another, or when, apart from the lute, they are twisted together, we may say that, in this intimate union, they are not so united as to produce music, which is the only kind of union asked of them. We must, then, separate in order to unite them; and it is this distance, and the just proportion given to them by art, which renders them capable of producing that fine harmony which we hear when they are touched. Let us, then,

suffer ourselves to be led to God. . . . Let us not trouble ourselves too much whether He separates or brings us nearer together; let us occupy ourselves wholly with His praise. It is a delusion to believe that we should praise Him better were we in another's place; let us praise Him where we are; and let each praise Him in his own place, that He may be praised on all sides, by all manner of men, under every variety of circumstance, that thus the harmony of the saints on earth, if that be possible, may be as uninterrupted as the harmony of the saints in heaven." And again: "All those who make the cause of Jesus Christ their own, think of us and pray for us. There are who, in the most distant places, lift up their hands to heaven for us, when perhaps we suffer ours to drop. . . . Before, we could see only those who were of our acquaintance; now, those even whom we do not know, and whom we have never seen, see us before the face of God, and console us by their prayers. . . . But how contracted is our view that we behold only the saints on earth who busy themselves for us! If we had the faith which gives the invisible eyes of which St. Augustine speaks so often, *invisibiles oculos*, we should see ourselves environed by all the hosts of heaven, and the hills, which are round about this besieged city, would appear to us all covered with chariots of fire for our defence."

Perhaps the most remarkable passages of these little treatises are those in which the author speaks of the sacraments of the Church. The nuns were deprived of them; but the mystic has a way to the presence of God, all unknown to the priest, and is willing to lead them with him. His central principle is that "whoso hath the spirit of Christ, cannot be cut off from Christ." This he proceeds to apply in detail. Of confession he says, "We have so often spoken to the ministers of Jesus Christ, without being advanced in the path; let us speak now to Jesus Christ

himself; his word has more power than that of a man. . . . Let us have more faith and fewer scruples. . . . We have only to address ourselves to this confessor of the heart, and he will receive our confession." Of the Eucharist: "Jesus Christ makes a greater trial of our faith when he enters our heart by closed doors, than when he comes in the ordinary way. . . . Who shall separate us from that holy Eucharist, which we receive immediately from the hand of Jesus Christ? . . . Who shall separate us from that invisible altar of which we are ourselves the priests? . . . Have we not received the Eucharist many times, and ought not that to be sufficient to awake our faith when it sleeps? Let us rouse in ourselves the grace of our past communions." Upon the Viaticum: "When the bridegroom arrives, the bride is no longer troubled that she has received no letters during his absence, and she is not astonished at the noise which she hears, when she learns that it is he who knocks at the door. . . . Have a little patience, the curtain is about to be drawn; you shall see Jesus Christ, as he sees you, and in seeing him, you will see all." And finally, upon the deprivation of Christian burial: "You threaten me with the deprivation of burial, if I do not consent to the oppression of the innocent, if I do not give a testimony which I believe to be false. . . . You menace me, as with a great evil, with that which I regard as a great good. . . . I shall be poor to the last, if you do not cause me to find a treasure in my grave. Those who despise their life, are not troubled about their burial. The sound of the trumpet will be heard as well in one place as in another." *

It is needless to enumerate the titles of Hamon's pious treatises, some of which were edited by Nicole after the author's death, and others continued to appear at intervals

* For all these citations I am indebted to Ste Beuve, vol. iv. p. 200, *et seq.*

till far into the eighteenth century. The passages which I have quoted will give a fair idea of the more practical of them. But Hamon's mysticism, as we might expect from his professional pursuits, had also an allegorical side, on which it was developed in utter contempt of logic and common sense. A commentary on the last six chapters of the Song of Solomon, in continuation of St. Bernard's unfinished work upon the same subject, is the chief expression of this phase of his religious life. In his "Autobiography" we have a singular account of the circumstances under which this commentary was begun. He felt a wish to write something; his confessors directed his attention to the Scriptures; and some natural affinity drew him to the Song of Solomon. On the afternoon of a day which he had been compelled to pass in Paris, and during which he had found it impossible to keep his mind intent on meditation and prayer, he went into an empty church to collect his wandering thoughts. The words "Thy neck is like the tower of David, builded for an armoury,"* occurred to him, and, it is impossible to say why, appeared applicable to his state of mind. He found himself so comforted and edified, that when he returned home he committed his thoughts to paper. Some time after, the words "Awake, O north wind," † and again these, "I will get me to the mountain of myrrh," ‡ excited in him the desire of comment, and De Saçi, to whom he showed his lucubrations, directed him to make them systematic, by beginning where St. Bernard had left off. All that it is necessary to say of the book is, that it fully corresponds to so hopeful a commencement. The Song of Solomon is dangerous ground for a mystic; and Hamon parted company with common sense when he passed its frontier. Nicole published the commentary in all simplicity and good

* Chap. iv. 4. † Chap. iv. 16. ‡ Chap. iv. 6.

faith; Arnauld more cautiously hinted, that a selection of its author's less fanciful allegories would have been sufficient.*

Hamon survived the Peace of the Church by nearly twenty years, occupying to the last the place of faithful physician and friend. But the story of the latter half of his life is almost wholly barren of incident. Once he was sent to Alet to prescribe for the Bishop; once he made a voluntary pilgrimage to St. Cyran and La Trappe. The list of his posthumously published works is so long as to justify the belief that he spent much of his time in study. He assumed, or was desired to undertake, the task of commemorating in Latin epitaphs the virtues of the many friends or inmates of Port Royal who died during the thirty-seven years of his connection with the house, and discharged it with an affectionate and tender zeal, which renders his elegant but somewhat diffuse Latinity a matter of secondary importance. In the utmost rudeness of his austerity he had never lost his scholarly habits, but loved to enshrine his daily thoughts and meditations in the compact and nervous phrase of the sacred tongue. The following prayer to Jesus Christ may serve as an example:—*Vivam tecum, quia omnis alia conversatio periculosa est. Vivam de te, quia omne aliud alimentum venenum est. Vivam propter te, quia qui sibi vivit et non tibi, non vivit sed mortuus est.* "I will live with thee, because all other conversation is perilous. I will live on thee, because all other food is poisonous. I will live for thee, because whosoever liveth to himself, and not to thee, is not living but dead." He never wholly gave up his connection with the Faculty of Medicine in Paris; though his medical brethren, looking at his peasant's garb, were wont to say that "there was nothing of a physician

* Autobiography, p. 34. Ste Beuve, vol. iv. p. 196.

about him, except the science and the charity." The titles of two theses, at the discussion of which he presided, "Sana sanis," and "An actio sine spiritu?" curiously illustrate, in their theological double meaning, his tendency to mystic allegory. He died in February 1687, in his sixty-ninth year, having left Port Royal a week or two before, to preside over a meeting of the Faculty of Medicine. His portrait, at the foot of which Boileau inscribed some complimentary verses, still hangs in their council chamber among those of the great French physicians. And Racine, returning in old age to the loves and memories of his youth, desired to be buried at his feet.*

A characteristic anecdote of the period when Hamon was physician, both of body and soul, to the imprisoned nuns, is connected with the name of Claude de Ste Marthe, one of the confessors of the community, to the memory of whose genuine and modest holiness I would willingly consecrate a few lines. A lofty tree grew outside of the garden wall at Port Royal des Champs, and so overtopped it, as to permit any one who had reached its upper branches to command part of the garden with eye and voice. Hither, it is said, came M. de Ste Marthe more than once or twice during the long imprisonment, and addressed to the nuns, huddled together below in the dark winter nights, words of consolation and encouragement. The confessor, whose charity was thus bold, is one of the many obscure figures who at Port Royal elude or perplex our scrutiny; he takes a share in all the action of our story, and yet his life has assumed so great a monotony of piety, that we cannot tell what manner of man he was. He came of a respectable parliamentary family; was educated for the Church, but refused preferment; soon cast

* Conf. Fontaine, vol. iv. p. 393. Besoigne, vol. iv. p. 245, *et seq.* Nécrologe, p. 95. Hamon's Autobiography, *passim.* Ste Beuve, vol. iv. p. 175, *et seq.*

in his lot with Port Royal; and, after Singlin died, aided De Saçi to supply the place of the great confessor. Nicole, Racine tells us, declared that he was "the holiest man whom he had seen at Port Royal;" and it was to him that Pascal opened his heart on his death-bed. He bore his part with others in the Jansenist controversy, yet always with a firm gentleness, which was his characteristic quality. From 1669 to 1679 he shared with De Saçi the duties of confessor at Port Royal des Champs; then, on the renewal of the persecution, retired to the house of a relation not far off. In 1690 he died, having reached his seventy-first year. A memorial distich well expresses his character and life:

"Impatiens falsi, verique tenacior, inde
Ingemuit, tacuit, fugit, et occubuit."

"Impatient of falsehood, more tenacious of truth; for this he groaned, was silent, fled, and died." The nuns on their side, commemorated what he had been to them in the following words from the seventy-eighth psalm, which they placed upon his grave at Port Royal: — "*Pavit eas in innocentiâ cordis sui.*" "He fed them in the integrity of his heart."*

* Du Fossé, p. 352. Besoigne, vol. iv. p. 211, *et seq.* Nécrologe, p. 399. Stᵉ Beuve, vol. iv. p. 233.

II.

An element of instability was introduced into the Peace of the Church, by the fact that, of the belligerent parties, the King, the Pope, the Four Bishops, and the Jesuits, only the three first took part in the negotiations, and arranged the terms of the treaty. We have seen already that the royal confessor, Père Annat, did not hear of the Peace till it was irrevocably concluded, and then expressed his disappointment in no measured terms both to the Nuncio and the King.* The Jesuits had the mortification of perceiving that the treaty, to which their enemies had given what form they pleased, was imposed without their consent upon themselves; and would have been singularly untrue to the ruling principles of their society, had they not striven to break a compact, which was a constant memorial of discomfiture. A large part of their strength lay in their control over the royal conscience. Annat died in 1670, but was succeeded by Ferrier, another Jesuit, and he again by the well-known Père la Chaise in 1674. Their work was made easier by the fact, that the persecution of Port Royal, not the Peace of the Church, represented the King's habitual convictions and policy. He hated innovation in the Church, only less than opposition in the state; and was persuaded that a short and direct road led from heresy to rebellion. It is indeed not easy to trace the motives, which induced him to enter upon the just and conciliatory course, which he pursued in his eccle-

* Vol. i. pp. 435, 436.

siastical administration between 1668 and 1675. The influence of Madame de Longueville went for something; the fear of placing too large a power in the hands of the Pope, for something more. Perhaps we may ascribe some influence to a genuine conviction that the Jesuits had overstated the demerits of Port Royal and the Arnaulds; the King, who was not without impulses of magnanimity, took a pride in investigating matters for himself, and in forming his own judgment. However this may be, the ancient prejudices gradually returned; the Society, in the person of the confessor, was always at hand to strengthen old, and to sow the seeds of new distrust; while the returning prosperity of Port Royal was sufficiently great, and imprudent enough in its display, to revive jealousy and misapprehension. Thus the death of Madame de Longueville, in April 1679, gave the signal for the immediate renewal of persecution.

M. de Perefixe, who died on the 1st of January 1671, escaped the perplexity of having to administer his diocese on principles directly contrary to those for which he had contended with more violence than wisdom. His successor, Harlay de Chanvalon, Archbishop of Rouen, was a man of very different mould. He had every advantage of figure and address; was bland, adroit, insinuating in his manners; the perfect type of the prelate-courtier. His great administrative powers, under the direction of a boundless ambition, elevated him to the post of minister for ecclesiastical affairs, and might, under more favourable circumstances, have seated him in the chair of Richelieu and Mazarin. Though far inferior in ability to Bossuet, and in character only to be named in contrast to Fénélon, he stood at the head of the Gallican clergy in their long struggle with the Pope; and, had the Four Articles produced a schism, might have been the first patriarch of France. Like many other men of similar character he

was not wilfully cruel or unjust; though when cruelty or injustice was necessary to the success of his policy, he did not turn aside for want of either. His morals were a public scandal; no temporal prince could live a softer, a more splendid, a more dissolute life than this prince of the Church. Port Royal, which had passed over in indulgent silence the more flagitious profligacy of his predecessor De Retz, noted his sins with holy horror; and tried to trace to some origin of fact his supposed personal animosity to the community. The attempt failed, for the animosity did not exist. Harlay had borne his part in negotiating the Peace of the Church, and now helped to break it for the same reason; — to recommend himself to the King, and so to climb to the highest places in the Gallican Church. He neither loved the Jesuits nor hated the Jansenists; but to the end of his life pursued a middle path, on which he was independent of either. When, in obedience to the royal command, he assumed the part of a persecutor, he performed it with the suavity of a gentleman; he dealt his blows with a courteous smile, and announced the hardest decisions in a gentle and sympathetic voice. But before long the nuns learned to fear him as much as they had feared M. de Perefixe, and to distrust him far more.*

But the storm did not break without giving more than one token of its approach. In 1675 a dispute as to the signature of the Formulary arose in the diocese of Angers, where the Bishop, Henri Arnauld, had long contended with a party of his clergy, who opposed themselves alike to his theology and his administration. It is now impossible to disentangle from their contradictory statements the true facts of the case. The Bishop alleged that the University of Angers exacted, in defiance of his will, the pure and

* St. Simon, vol. ii. p. 112. D'Aguesseau, quoted by Ste Beuve, vol. v. p. 8.

simple signature of the Formulary; the University retorted that the Bishop would receive only such modified signature as he and his friends were prepared to give. Each party was thus accused by the other of an infraction of the Peace; but each denied the truth of the other's allegation. After much preliminary conflict the matter was referred to the King, who, in an edict dated May 30th, 1676, made a declaration which seemed to unsettle the very foundations of the Peace. For he expressly said that "his condescension . . . in admitting some signatures of the Formulary with a more detailed explanation, in favour of certain private individuals only, and with a view of relieving them from their scruples," was not to be interpreted as a "revocation of the bull which prescribes the signature of the Formulary on oath." By this statement the Peace was at once transformed from a compact between the throne and a great party in the Church, into an act of royal grace to one or two over-sensitive consciences, which was not to be drawn into a precedent.*

Occasions of offence come quickly when men are upon the watch for them. In 1677, the King's suspicions were once more directed against Arnauld and Nicole. The Bishops of Arras and of St. Pons, who had conceived the idea of addressing to the new Pope, Innocent XI., a letter, complaining of the perversions of morality contained in the books of the casuists, prevailed upon Nicole, through the intervention of Madame de Longueville, to undertake its composition. Nicole had nothing to do with the origination, or even with the substance of the document; his sole business was to turn it into correct and, if it might be, elegant Latin. When the task was done, the letter was submitted for signature to several bishops, one of whom soon took it to Harlay and the King. Louis, hotly

* Guilbert, vol. ii. p. 80, *et seq.*

forbidding all the prelates of the kingdom to prosecute the matter farther, turned the full force of his anger upon Arnauld and Nicole. He directed Pomponne to write to his uncle with the statement "that the King, who had hitherto been satisfied with his conduct, was no longer so in the affair of this letter to the Pope, which he looked upon as the beginning of fresh disputes." A long correspondence followed; Arnauld defended himself and his friend; the Bishop of Arras weakly and falsely disavowed his share in the letter; and Pomponne acted with more regard for his place than honesty to Arnauld, or loyalty to the truth. Fresh misunderstandings arose to complicate and to embitter the first; and little more was needed to urge the King to decisive action.*

But the dispute of the Régale, destined to have so great and so lasting an influence upon the Gallican Church, had been begun in 1673, and in 1675 broke out into open warfare. It unfortunately happened that the King's only episcopal opponents were Pavillon of Alet, and Caulet of Pamiers, two of the Four who had defended the cause of Port Royal, and whose virtues were still a main support of the Jansenist party. Pomponne, politic as usual, was in despair at this new complication. But it luckily happened that Arnauld had not as yet mingled in the fray; could he not be brought to make a public declaration of neutrality? The minister, who did not himself venture to lay this proposal before his impracticable uncle, persuaded his sister, La Mère Angélique de St. Jean, to undertake the communication. She wrote hesitatingly and with a half-protest, as if she expected some such answer as she received. Arnauld begins his reply by wondering that the air of the court should so corrupt the conscience as to

* Guilbert, vol. ii. p. 129. *et seq.* Vie d'Antoine Arnauld, vol. ii. p. 72, *et seq.* Vie de Nicole, p. 264, *et seq.* Lettres d'A. Arnauld, vol. iii. Nos. 171, 177, 178; vol. viii. Nos. 52, 53.

induce Pomponne to send him such advice as his niece has now transmitted. It is difficult enough to believe that silence in such a quarrel is right before God. "But that beyond this," he breaks out, "I should of my own accord make a cowardly declaration that I have taken no part in what two holy Bishops have done in the best of causes,—a cause in which they could have had in view only the glory of God, and the preservation of their Churches' rights,—and in what holy ecclesiastics continue to do, whose firm devotion to their duty under the harshest treatment is an occasion for praise to God, for that He deigns to give us in this unhappy time, wherein one sees only baseness and subservience, examples of generosity worthy of the best ages: that I should make, I say, a declaration which would lead men to suppose that I was at least neutral in this matter, is truly so shameful a thing, as to render it incomprehensible to me that any one should have dared to propose it. But I wonder no less how any one should imagine that this could place us in a more favourable light before the King's mind; instead of which, it appears to me clearer than the day, that the only result would be the loss of our reputation in the world for sincerity and generosity. For those who believed this declaration sincere, would take us for cowards, and those who did not, for rogues. . . . Nevertheless, it is not this which deters me. For if I were assured that it would have the best possible result, and that for want of it all that is dearest to me in the world would be irretrievably ruined, I should not be less averse to doing what has been proposed to me; because we are no true Christians if we are not resolved to follow in the conduct of our lives these two maxims: the one of St. Paul, '*Non sunt facienda mala, ut eveniant bona*,'—'We are not to do evil that good may come;' the other of St. Augustine, '*Quod non*

potest juste, non potest justus,'—'That which cannot be done justly, the just man cannot do.'

"I know well that those who give this advice would not give it if they saw in it anything contrary to conscience. But this it is which astonishes me, and which I can only impute to an excess of affection for a holy house whose ruin they fear,—a fear which makes them believe that, provided only they do not lie, there is no statement which they may not make to appease an unjustly irritated King. Is it not true, they say, that you have done nothing in this affair? It is. You can say so, then? Yes, if I am asked, and if I cannot evade the necessity of reply. And even in that case, I should be obliged to add, that my inaction has not been for want of good-will, but only of opportunity. But it is quite another thing to say this without being asked. For that would be nothing less than to give the King the impression that the matter appeared to me doubtful, and that I was neither on one side nor the other; that is to say, that I was neutral between Jesus Christ and the devil."*

The writer of such a letter as this was a candidate for any crown of martyrdom which it was the custom of his age to bestow. In Spain his doom might have been the Auto-da-Fé; in France it was no more severe than exile. Three weeks after Madame de Longueville's death, Pomponne announced to Arnauld, by royal command, that he would not be suffered to make himself the centre of the Jansenist cabal which had met at the Hôtel de Longueville. In a few days more, Harlay followed up Pomponne's visit, by requiring Arnauld to quit his house in the Fauxbourg St. Jacques, and to take up his abode in a less suspected quarter. He obeyed by retiring to Fontenai-aux-Roses, two leagues from Paris. But before he had been long

* Lettres d'A. Arnauld, vol. viii. p. 82.

there, the Duc de Montausier, who as Governor of the Dauphin held a high position at court, sent him word, that if he consulted his own safety, he would leave France as soon as possible. Even in this last strait, his loyalty guided him in the choice of an asylum: he would not go to Rome, where he was sure of an honourable reception from Innocent XI., lest he should seem to take refuge with the King's enemies; and therefore decided to repair to the Austrian Netherlands. He set out from Paris about the middle of June 1679, and four days afterwards arrived at Mons. Here for a while we will leave him, while we watch the bursting of the storm upon Port Royal. He is sixty-eight years of age; he is already beginning to suffer an old man's infirmities; his means are inadequate to the requirements of residence in a foreign country; and fifteen long years of banishment still stretch before him. But his only regret is that he is compelled to quit his friends. Even this is not without its consolation; for, "to those who sacrifice all for God, God stands in place of all." To the last he will be faithful to the oath which he took when the Sorbonne declared him doctor: that he would defend the truth at all risks, "even to the shedding of blood." *

When Madame de Longueville died, on the 15th of April 1679, Angélique de St. Jean Arnauld was Abbess of Port Royal. She had succeeded in that office La Mère du Fargis, who had been chosen immediately after the Peace in 1669, and had held the chair, in virtue of three successive elections, till 1678. Many of the memoirs, in which the earlier history of the reformed Port Royal is preserved, were the productions of her pen, and it is to her minute narrative † that we owe our knowledge of the circumstances under which the second persecution was commenced. On the 9th of May, four days after Pomponne's visit of warn-

* Vie d'A. Arnauld, vol. ii. p. 103, *et seq.*

† Guilbert, vol. ii. p. 184, *et seq.*

ing to Arnauld, two ecclesiastics, who announced themselves as messengers from the Archbishop, arrived at Port Royal, and asked to see the Abbess. Their errand, which they courteously performed, was to inquire into the numbers of the community. The Abbess answered that the house contained seventy-three professed, and twenty lay sisters; besides two novices, several postulants, and forty-two boarders. The visitors expressed surprise when they heard the report, and still more when they learned that the number had not been increased since the Peace. In general they seemed to find the establishment in the valley much smaller and less complete than they looked for, and went away with many compliments. Their visit was, however, only a prelude to that of the Archbishop, who unexpectedly arrived on the 17th of May. He came as High Mass was beginning to be said, and so found no one ready to receive him. His first interview was with De Saçi, whom he requested to preparethe Abbess's mind for the communication of the royal commands. The key note of his visit was struck in his first words; nothing could be more bland than the compliments with which on bchalf of himself and the King, he overwhelmed the confessor. His conduct, his works, his love of peace all came in for abundant commendation; pity that other of his friends were not more like him. So when the Abbess met the Archbishop in the parlour, his hat was in his hand at every word she spoke; his voice and phrases were expressive of the tenderest sympathy; and he was as explicit in asserting the blamelessness of the house as in declaring the King's unalterable intentions in regard to it. He seemed to regret that he had no choice but to interdict the reception of fresh novices till the number of professed nuns was reduced to fifty. Three postulants who were about to take the veil as novices might be suffered to remain; all the rest must be at once sent away. The boarders were in like manner expelled from the

house, and the community forbidden to receive others until further notice.

The only reason which the Archbishop gave for this sudden and violent proceeding — a reason which he seemed to think amply sufficient — was "that the canons of the Church provide that no greater number of nuns shall be received in a monastery than its funds are able to support, and that the property of this house having been diminished by the decree of division, the community was disproportionately numerous." Angélique in vain reminded him, that the King and M. de Perefixe had themselves fixed the number of the community, after the separation from Port Royal de Paris, at seventy-two professed sisters; and pointed out that the prohibition to receive boarders was the greatest blow that could possibly be struck against the resources of the house. The Archbishop fell back upon the royal will, of which he was less the interpreter than the unwilling instrument, and tried to make sympathy and solicitude do the work of explanation and argument. His only attempt at excuse was to say, that the King was weary of always hearing of Port Royal, of Messieurs de Port Royal; that Arnauld was the centre of a clique; that he was a rallying point of discontent in church and state; and so forth, through much indefinite accusation. But whether from a genuine reluctance to wound, or in accordance with the whole subtle policy of his visit, he reserved the sharpest arrow in his quiver for the last. He had taken leave of the Abbess and was being conducted to his carriage by De Saçi, when he suddenly turned round, and addressing the latter, "in a pleasant tone of voice," informed him, that the King did not intend to permit either him or any of the other confessors to remain at Port Royal, and that therefore, they had better quietly withdraw within a fortnight. Then, after having inflicted as much mischief in one courteous visit of a few hours as M. de Perefixe in the stormy

struggle of as many months, he drove away, leaving dismay and despair behind him.

A very short trial convinced the sisterhood and their friends that all attempt at remonstrance would be vain. The King would receive no appeal; the Archbishop sheltered himself behind the immovable resolution of the King. The royal orders were soon executed, with even more severity than Harlay had at first threatened. The postulants, including the three who had been promised admission among the novices, were dismissed; the boarders sent home. Tillemont, who had just been ordained priest, with the intention of succeeding to De Saçi's office as confessor, retired to the paternal estate from which he took his name: De Saçi, now verging upon his seventieth year, withdrew to Pomponne to spend the brief remnant of his days in the biblical studies which he loved. It was easy to penetrate the secret of the royal policy. The citadel, which had withstood the sharp assault of M. de Perefixe, was now to be reduced by patient blockade. The reduction of the nuns to the number of fifty — a number itself arbitrarily fixed — was a pretence without power of deception; only the most sanguine could hope that permission to receive novices would ever again be granted. The sisterhood was destined to die a slow, but yet a natural death; one by one the seats in the church would be emptied, one by one the graves beneath its shadow would be filled, till at last the church and the graves would be the sole, silent relics of Port Royal. Meanwhile, no ray of royal indulgence should be suffered to reach the everlessening community which thus maintained a lingering existence; they should be cut off from the friends on whom they were wont to rely, and debarred from all opportunity of forming new ones; whatever portion of their income could be intercepted, without actual spoliation, should be taken away; and the King would look with

angry frown on all who tendered sympathy or aid. Such was the policy which was pursued without interruption or remission to the last. Once, indeed, there was a scheme, which was not carried into execution, for again uniting Port Royal des Champs with Port Royal de Paris under a new Abbess, and destroying by this means the distinctive character of the former. With this exception, if exception it can be called, the monastery was suffered to perish of slow decay through the last years of the seventeenth century. Then the Jesuits, perhaps fearing that the wretched remnant of the once numerous community might survive the King, and under a milder rule again flourish as of old, struck a sudden and fatal blow; as if impelled by some secret prompting of Divine Justice to recall to men's memories that Port Royal had not perished by natural extinction, but had been foully done to death.*

It was, however, necessary that the nuns should have some ecclesiastical aid; the services in the convent church were to be kept up, and the community had committed no fresh offence which would justify the Archbishop in depriving them of the sacraments. So he desired them to name a number of priests, from whom he would select two, who might supply such scanty measure of religious help and comfort, as he judged sufficient. He did not want men of learning and ability, for the sisterhood, he thought, already knew too much: any who were suspected of Jansenist tendencies he would not appoint; and yet a violent Molinist might precipitate matters in a way inconsistent with his gentle and subtle policy. A new difficulty arose in a quarter whence it was not looked for. Men of good character and unblemished reputation, who had no special sympathy with Port Royal, and yet were willing to encounter the risks of a residence there, were hard to be

* Guilbert, vol. ii. pp. 216, 224, 244, 300.

found. They shrank equally from identifying themselves with the community, and from making themselves the tools of its opponents. Out of twenty-seven ecclesiastics whose names were mentioned, three were objected to by the Archbishop, and no fewer than twenty-two refused to serve.* The two obscure priests, on whom the choice rested, found it before long impossible to maintain their place. Then the Archbishop, in spite of "the good nose for Jansenism" which he boasted of possessing, sometimes made mistakes, and suffered a friend in disguise to gain admittance to the beleaguered citadel. In November, 1680, a M. Lemoine came to Port Royal as confessor, and had won all hearts, when it was suddenly discovered that he had been not only a director of Pavillon's seminary at Alet, but the instrument of conveying to the Bishop of Pamiers, when deprived of his episcopal income for his resistance in the affair of the Régale, the alms of the faithful. The alarm was at once sounded, and M. Lemoine was expelled, only to make way for a more dangerous successor. The Duc de Roannez, still a faithful friend of the community, ventured to recommend to the Archbishop M. le Tourneux. But had he not once made a retreat at Port Royal in its palmy days? asked the wary Harlay. The Duke answered the question truthfully, but concealed much that would have marred the effect of his answer. M. le Tourneux had once been taken ill in the neighbourhood of Port Royal des Champs, had been hospitably received, and tenderly nursed there; this was the sole foundation for the story of retreat. M. de Roannez did not tell the Archbishop that the new candidate for the office of confessor owed his education to the family of Du Fossé, who were attached heart and soul to the cause of the

* Guilbert, vol. ii. p. 242.

sisterhood; that many of his most intimate friends had been solitaries at Port Royal, and that his opinions were as thoroughly Jansenist as those of Arnauld himself. The appointment was made, but soon cancelled. Le Tourneux was a born orator, one who might have rivalled the fame of Massillon or Bourdaloue, had greater opportunities opened before him, or had his theological convictions been on the side of the court. He preached in Paris during Lent, 1682, with extraordinary success. The King is recorded * to have said one day to Boileau, "Who is this preacher whom they call Le Tourneux? They say that all the world runs after him,—is he then so clever?" "Sire," answered Boileau, "your Majesty knows that people always run after something new; this is a preacher who preaches the Gospel." And on being pressed by the King to give his own opinion, he said, "When he enters the pulpit he frightens you so by his ugliness that you wish to see him leave it; but when he has begun to speak, your only fear is lest he should leave it." His style of preaching was simple, familiar, practical: he is recorded to have made but little preparation for the pulpit, and to have trusted to the impulse of the moment for power to enforce the great truths which filled his mind. His published works were of the same character: one of them, "The Christian Year," which included Racine's translation of the hymns of the Breviary, attained a wide popularity, not diminished by the fact that it was condemned by the Holy See, on the ground that it contained a translation of the office of the Mass into the vulgar tongue. M. le Tourneux, who was withdrawn from Port Royal after the too great success of his Lent sermons in 1682, died suddenly in 1686. Though never connected with the monastery by any closer ties than those which I have mentioned, he bequeathed to

* Vie de Racine, p. 38.

it the sum of 4000 livres, the profits of his theological works; and his heart was deposited in its Church.*

It is not necessary to speak at length of the other confessors, who were entrusted with the charge of the slowly dying community during the last thirty years of its existence. One of them, M. Eustace, who after a short interval succeeded Le Tourneux in 1686, remained at Port Royal till 1705. His youth, when he first accepted the office, threw a shade of doubt upon his qualifications; but the influence of Port Royal, even in those days of decrepitude, was sufficiently strong to mould him into its own likeness, and he became, at least in devotion to the interests of the house, a not unworthy successor of Singlin and De Saçi.† But the great men, whose names are associated with the most flourishing period of French Jansenism, are rapidly passing away, and their places are occupied by others of inferior mark. Quesnel is but a weaker Arnauld, Du Guet, a lesser Singlin; while even these belong not so much to our tale as to the melancholy story of the Jansenism of the eighteenth century. For a few years, the historian of Port Royal must be content to chronicle the slow progress of decay, the successive conquests of death. Even were he to pass beyond the proper limits of his subject, he could borrow for the conclusion of his narrative, but a sickly and transitory life from the succeeding generation. The golden age of Jansenism perished with Port Royal.

The beginning of 1684 brought with it a new occasion of grief in the death of De Saçi, the last of the three great confessors, who had impressed upon Port Royal its peculiar character of sober piety, of reserved austerity. When the Peace of the Church released him from the Bastille, he

* For the above, and more precise information as to M. le Tourneux, see Du Fossé, pp. 330, *et seq.* 391. Guilbert, vol. ii. p. 466; vol. iii. p. 26. Besoigne, vol. v. p. 101, *et seq.* Ste Beuve, vol. v. p. 57, *et seq.*

† Besoigne, vol. v. p. 123.

did not at once return to Port Royal des Champs; but rejecting all offers of preferment, retired to Pomponne, where he spent three or four quiet studious years. To Pomponne he again betook himself, when M. de Harlay's visit to Port Royal in 1679 once more expelled him from his chosen solitude. The last five years of his life were occupied in the biblical labours, of which I shall presently give an account; once only, during that period, he returned to Port Royal, by special permission of the King, to receive the confession of Madlle. de Vertus, now old and bedridden. During the summer of 1683, De Saçi, then more than seventy years of age, was attacked with intermittent fever; but a visit to Paris, and the medical treatment which he there underwent, seemed to restore him to perfect health, and his friends welcomed him on his return to Pomponne, as one given back to them from the dead. Their joy was of short duration; the remedies had only driven the disease inward upon some vital part. On the 3rd of January, St. Geneviève's day, he said mass in his private chapel; then, sitting down at noon to his frugal dinner with one or two friends, discoursed for almost two hours on the life of the Saint, with singular enthusiasm and force. Those who had been present at the morning's mass noticed that he had spoken of ineffable mysteries, as if he had seen them with the eyes of the body, no veil or cloud between; now a friend remarked, on leaving the table, "He is not long for this world; we shall soon lose him." In a moment more, he cried for help in a strangely altered voice; adding, with the last thoughtfulness of love, "Do not frighten my cousin Luzançi." He was at once carried to bed, but did not survive many hours. The next day, the 4th of January 1684, was his last.

His will provided that he should be buried at Port Royal des Champs; where the nuns awaited with sad eagerness the return of the dead confessor, to abide with

those who had so loved and obeyed him in life. As yet Louis and his Jesuit directors did not make war upon the dead, and no opposition was offered to the transference of the body from Pomponne to Port Royal. The journey was through Paris, where the coffin was to remain for a night in the church of St. Jacques du Haut-Pas, the last resting-place of St. Cyran. Some of the great Jansenist ladies of Paris, and especially the Duchesse de Lesdiguières, had prepared a solemn torchlight procession, to meet the funeral at the Porte St. Antoine, and thence escort it to the church; but it was deemed prudent not only to avoid so perilous an honour, but at once to continue the route to Port Royal. There, in the first grey dawn of a winter's morning, the little party, which had struggled all night with snow and ice, such as few living men remembered to have seen, were met in mournful array by the sisterhood, who welcomed their friend and father to his rest, "with love that burned more brightly in their hearts than the tapers in their hands." They ventured, although he had been so long dead, to open the coffin, and to clothe the corpse, according to usage, in priestly vestments; the countenance was unchanged, and almost seemed to feel and to return the kiss of peace and farewell. Then it was solemnly committed to the earth.

The Abbess, Angélique de St. Jean Arnauld, De Saçi's cousin and close friend, led the long procession of her nuns with an apparent calmness which boded no good. When Fontaine had begged her to postpone the interment for a few hours, that he might delay the moment of separation from his beloved friend and master, she had answered, almost hardly as it seemed, "that it was needful to hide in the earth that which was only earth, and to give back to nothingness what in itself was no more than nothingness." She had told the sisterhood, that tears and lamentations were unworthy of him who was gone, and of the

God in whom they put their trust; and, herself setting the example, repressed their passionate lamentations. But inward tears, like inward bleedings, are more dangerous than those which find their way to the light; only three weeks had passed, when another funeral procession paced the aisles,— this time bearing the Abbess to her grave. Her heart had broken for very love; since her cousin's burial she had spent some part of every day at his tomb, begging God to take her too; and now the prayer was answered. She died on the 29th of January; on the 13th of February, her brother De Luzançi, who forty-two years before had fled in the heyday of youth to the sacred desert, was brought back, and laid by De Saçi's side. He too had pined away for want of the friend of a lifetime, and fell, as the vine falls with the elm to which it clings. Poor Fontaine, who amid all changes of fortune, in the Bastille as at Port Royal, had been De Saçi's companion and second self, reproached himself that the stroke was not mortal to him too. "I confess," he says*, "that seeing this brother and sister thus slain by M. de Saçi's death, I blushed,— I who thought that I had always loved him,— that I did not follow him like them; and I returned half in despair with myself, for loving so little in comparison with those whose love had been strong as death. I was transported above measure with this triumph of affection, which overcomes all obstacles, and breaks those bonds of the body, which hold it back, and hinder it from following its object. I was humiliated to have so small a part in it."†

De Saçi's character is one which it is not easy to describe: he moves among his brethren of Port Royal like a monk among men; a cloaked and cowled figure, impatient of address, and chary of words. In him the grey uni-

* Mém. vol. iv. p. 366.

† Fontaine, vol. iv. pp. 306—370. Du Fossé, p. 370, *et seq.* Guilbert, vol. ii. p. 550, *et seq.*

formity of tint, characteristic of Jansenist holiness, seems almost to cover and blot out the colours of individual manhood. He is distinguished from his two great predecessors, St. Cyran and Singlin, by the fact that, while they to a large extent made Port Royal what it was, he was wholly moulded by it. They brought to it an experience gathered in the world outside: St. Cyran mingled in all the ecclesiastical affairs of his day, and at no time led a solitary life; Singlin was trained in the school of Vincent de Paul. But De Saçi never retired from the world, for he never lived in it. Though designed for the Church, he would not enter the Sorbonne, and prevailed upon St. Cyran to sanction a private course of study. At the time when other young men are eager to engage in the conflict of life, his anxious wish was to become one of the little community of which his brothers Le Maître and De Sericourt were the centre. Till he was thirty-five, he shunned the responsibilities of the priesthood; passing his whole time in study, now with De Barcos, in the house of the imprisoned St. Cyran, now with Arnauld, in the hiding-place to which he had retired after the publication of the "Book of Frequent Communion." Then, in January 1649, Singlin, overburthened with the direction of the two houses, and so great a number of penitents, established De Saçi as confessor at Port Royal des Champs; presenting him to the reluctant community with the words of half-proud, half-modest friendship, "He must increase, but I must decrease." Here he remained till the dispersion in 1661, when he betook himself to Madame Vitart's house in the Fauxbourg St. Marceau. His arrest in 1666, his two years' imprisonment in the Bastille, the period of final activity at Port Royal, and the last retirement to Pomponne, complete the story of a life which, from the beginning to the end, shuns the world's eye. Yet De Saçi was perfectly content with it; and confessed that, if

the opportunity of choice had been given him, he would have chosen no other. If the theory of life adopted by Port Royal were true, none could be so fortunate as he. He had never known those temptations of the world, whose fatal persuasiveness all who had fled from them deplored; and the sacred solitude in which so many took refuge, as a land-locked haven of security and peace, had been his life-long home.

Thus there is an air of innocence about De Saçi which fitted him in a peculiar way, thought Du Fossé *, to be the confessor of virgins. But he had his own conception of a more complete isolation of thought and desire, than was usual even at Port Royal, — a conception which he persistently sought to realise. He avoided the few visitors who found their way to the valley. All his conversation and, as far as possible, all his thoughts were of religion. He adopted as his motto the words, "*Ut non loquatur os meum opera hominum*,"—"That my mouth may not utter the works of men." He was wont to say that "all the mischief in the world arose from men's inability to remain quietly in their own rooms;" and thought that the only result of travel was a wider acquaintance with the devices of the devil, who was *crudelis ubique*—everywhere alike cruel. Theologian as he was, he confined his studies to the practical questions of religion; an acquaintance with its speculative difficulties was hardly necessary to one whose sole business was the charge of his own and others' souls. Of all our solitaries, except perhaps Singlin, he is the least controversial. His influence is always on the side of peace. Over his companions in the valley he exercises the sway of a self-controlled character; however, at times, they seem to break loose from his guidance, the power of a holiness so quiet, so con-

* Mém. p. 103.

sistent, so self-possessed, soon reasserts itself, and he is once more the acknowledged leader. And beneath the still surface of his life must have burned a strange and constant fire of love, that so many hearts should grow cold for the loss of its kindly glow.

The secret of his life was not unknown to his companions in solitude, for he strove to impart it to them. He made it his study "to conceive a great idea of God," and to have the thought of Him always present to his mind. He was wont to repeat the words of Job*: "*Semper enim quasi tumentes super me fluctus timui Deum, et pondus ejus ferre non potui*,"—"For always have I feared God as a flood swelling over me, and His weight I have not been able to bear." "I do not believe," says Fontaine †, "that there is a single one of those who knew him who has not heard this text from his lips. Nor did he merely say it; he felt it too, and felt it like holy Job, not with a transitory feeling, but with a heart-felt emotion that was always the same." He is the Enoch of our story, for "he walked with God." I know no word of his which better displays this than a simple phrase in which he was wont to exhort the sick to patience: "As for me, when I am sick, I do not ask God for patience to carry me through the whole day; in the morning I am content to ask it for the forenoon, at noon for the afternoon, at evening for the night." Surely these are the accents of a child who, never forsaking his Father's side, can at any moment ask Him to supply the moment's need.‡

De Saçi, like all the Port Royalists, was a great reader of St. Augustine; but a still greater of the Bible. The

* xxxi. 23. The words in the text are according to the Vulgate, which in this place differs widely from the English version.

† Mémoires, vol. ii. p. 311.

‡ Conf. Vol. I. pp. 153, 215, 428. For De Saçi's character, see Fontaine, *passim*.

two were almost all his library; he desired no knowledge except such as they could furnish. To the solitaries under his charge he recommended the study of the Scriptures, with an earnestness that sounded strangely in their ears. "A drop of water," he would say, "which is not enough for a man, is enough for a bird. The sacred waters have this peculiarity, that they proportion and accommodate themselves to every case. A lamb walks in them; and they are at the same time deep enough for an elephant to swim." * And again, "A holy bishop of these latter days has said that he would go to the world's end with his St. Augustine—and so would I with my Bible." † But while thus desiring with almost a Protestant zeal, to see the Scriptures in the hands of the laity, he still held the doctrine of his church, that the text ought to be accompanied by orthodox exposition and comment. And the translation and elucidation of the Bible were the literary work of his life.

Before the middle of the seventeenth century the Bible had been more than once translated into French. But the Huguenot versions were rejected by the Church as unfaithful and unsound; while all which were able to boast a Catholic origin, had become antiquated in phrase, as the language made its rapid progress to purity and grace. In common with many moderate Catholics, Port Royal maintained the right of the laity to read the Bible in the vulgar tongue; and, ever mindful of the work of edification, took steps to supply the manifest want. As early as 1657, Le Maître, according to one account, in consequence of a desire expressed by the Assembly of the Clergy in 1655 that a new version of the Scriptures should be made, undertook to translate the New Testament from the Vulgate. At his death in 1658, he bequeathed the unfinished work to De

* Fontaine, vol. ii. p. 383. † Ibid. p. 386.

Saçi, who willingly charged himself with its completion and revision. But the version was now (or perhaps even before Le Maître's death) the work of a committee; who met first at Vaumurier, the house of the Duc de Luynes, and then after the dispersion, at the Hôtel de Longueville. Arnauld, Nicole, M. de Luynes, Pontchâteau, Treville, Pascal, and several others, are recorded to have taken a greater or less share in these conferences. The translation was now based upon the Greek text; the Fathers and the ancient versions were consulted in the determination of the sense. In particular, Nicole's work is said to have been the comparison of the proposed renderings with St. Chrysostom and with Beza; the translation of the latter being a rock, which it was deemed advisable to avoid. But a letter from Angélique de St. Jean Arnauld to her uncle Antoine, dated about 1667 *, is conclusive as to the real authorship. She speaks of "the three principal translators of this new version of the New Testament; he who dug the foundations, having by his example renewed in the Church the penitence to which the gospel exhorts us (Le Maître); the second, who has raised the whole edifice, cements it, and makes it firm by his bonds (De Saçi); and you, who have set the pinnacle on it, by God's grace, defend even to death those eternal truths, which do not accommodate themselves to any period, but at every period deliver those who love only the good things of eternity, and do not fear the evils of this world."

Angélique de St. Jean alludes in the same letter to a difference of opinion as to the translation, which was beginning to show itself in the inner circles of Port Royal. Some of De Saçi's friends thought it hard that, while he lay in honourable bonds for the truth, his work should be revised by one like Treville, who hardly belonged to the

* Divers Actes Rel. vi. p. 22.

sacred few, and was looked upon by the nuns as, in comparison with their beloved confessor, a mere man of the world. Arnauld, who, regarding the matter from the scholar's point of view, did not see why, to make the version as nearly perfect as possible, they should not avail themselves of Treville's knowledge of Greek and admitted taste in the use of his own language, interposed his authority, and in an admirable letter to Hamon, who appears to have shared the discontent, defended the version from the dangers to which a narrow spirit of party might have exposed it. When in 1666 De Saçi was arrested, the work was so nearly complete, that he had the preface in his pocket. But the Chancellor Seguier refused to permit it to be printed in France; and the editors turned to Holland, a country in whose free presses all the proscribed literature of Europe found a refuge. Pontchâteau undertook to manage the matter; the book, printed by the Elzevirs, was published in 1667 at Mons, with permission of the King of Spain, and the approbation of the Archbishop of Cambrai. On this account it is universally known in the controversies of the day as "The New Testament of Mons."

Its appearance produced a great sensation, which was not diminished by the fact that the Jesuits bitterly inveighed against it from the pulpit, while the Archbishop forbade the faithful of his diocese to read it. For the first time the New Testament was given to the public, in a form which could be read with pleasure; edition after edition was sold, and the Gospel became the fashion. Then the Archbishop of Embrun, an ignorant, hot-headed priest, presented to the King a petition against the version: to which Arnauld replied in a memorial, esteemed by all the Jansenists as a masterpiece of Christian controversy. The time was inauspicious for the Archbishop's attack; the negotiations for the Peace had almost reached maturity, and Louis, for

once, was disposed to see in a favourable light, everything that came from the Arnaulds. The court, ever watchful of the King's prejudices, became suddenly Jansenist; and M. d'Embrun was mercilessly laughed at. Condé, in particular, who always had a good word for 'the friends of Madame de Longueville,' did not spare him. "This day," says a lively writer*, "was extremely fatal to the Archbishop of Embrun, for in the afternoon, as they were at Vespers, M. le Prince, perceiving that M. le Duc was reading Arnauld's memorial, M. de Montausier the New Testament of Mons, and Madame la Maréchale de la Mothe, governess of M. le Dauphin, the Hours of Port Royal, turned towards M. d'Embrun, and, shrugging his shoulders, said in a tone which every one heard, and which plainly showed that he was laughing at him, 'What disorder, M. d'Embrun! This is not a church, but a witch's Sabbath. My son is reading the memorial, M. de Montausier the New Testament of Mons, and Madame de la Mothe the Hours of Port Royal. All is lost, M. d'Embrun; these people are excommunicated; they will draw down God's curse upon us; the roof of the church will fall, let us begone!" The time during which it was possible to say such things at Versailles was very short; M. d'Embrun's turn soon came, and lasted longer.

One of the first results of the peace was a fresh committee to revise the New Testament of Mons, of which Bossuet, who never signalised himself among the enemies of Port Royal, and now, in the first fervour of reconciliation, assumed the attitude of a friend, is said to have been a member. But the revision was interrupted by the death of M. de Perefixe, who had authorised it: and the Port Royalists were left to pursue their biblical studies in their own way. While imprisoned in the Bastille, De Saçi had

* Quoted by St^e^ Beuve, vol. iv. p. 278.

translated, either from the Septuagint or the Vulgate, the whole of the Old Testament, which he now received permission to print, on condition that he accompanied the text by a sufficient comment. To this labour he applied himself, and published, in 1672, the first volume containing the Proverbs. From this time till his death in 1684, the successive volumes were issued at intervals. De Saçi lived to write the exposition of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, the two books of Samuel, the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Wisdom of Solomon, Isaiah, and the Minor Prophets. Then Du Fossé continued the work, which was finally completed about the end of the century by other less known hands. The thirty-two octavo volumes, of which it consisted, bore the title: "The Bible translated into French; with an explanation of the literal and the spiritual sense, taken from the Holy Fathers and the Ecclesiastical Authors." Massive as the work was, it passed through several editions, and formed the basis of more than one subsequent version.

De Saçi's Bible — for the work is inseparably connected with his name — is to be estimated rather from the practical than the critical point of view. There is no evidence to show that it was based upon the Hebrew text: while we know that Le Maître's version of the New Testament, on which the subsequent labours of De Saçi and his friends were founded, was made from the Vulgate. Such critical knowledge of the Scriptures, as then existed, was chiefly to be found in Protestant churches: nor was Port Royal distinguished from other schools of Catholic theology by any special width or exactness of philological attainment. The value of De Saçi's Bible was chiefly felt by the laity, and most of all by women; to whom, unable to read even the Vulgate, the Scriptures had been hitherto a sealed book. An access to the sources of religious truth was now open to them, in the pages of a version, which, if not

exact according to the standard of modern scholarship, or elegant as the simpler taste of our own day counts elegance, was expressed in the language of current literature, and informed with the reverential and conscientious spirit of the translator. It stands in the same relation to the French, as the authorised version to the English, as Luther's translation to the German language; though, from the fact, that it was made at a later period of literary development, it is inferior in simplicity and force to either. But it remains, a noble testimony to De Saçi's pious industry, as well as to the boldness with which, at a critical period of its own history, Port Royal vindicated the right of the unlearned to the Scriptures, against the half expressed and disingenuous hostility of the Catholic Church.*

We cannot leave the grave of the last Abbess of Port Royal who bore the name of Arnauld without a word of commemoration. Angélique, the second daughter and fifth child of M. d'Andilly, was born in 1624, and had thus reached her sixtieth year when she died. At the age of six, she was sent for education to the convent, which she never afterwards left. Her great abilities marked her out as one who would be conspicuous in good or ill, and the balance long hung in suspense ere it finally inclined to the side of conventual virtue.† But when at last she owned the influence of La Mère Angélique, to whom she bore a greater resemblance than to the gentler Agnès, she was soon imbued with the spirit of the house, and qualified herself to assume a share in its government. She took the veil in 1644, and before long was entrusted with the charge of the children; then she was appointed Mistress of the Novices, an office which she held for many years.

* Reuchlin, vol. ii. p. 268, also Appendix L. Ste Beuve, vol. ii. p. 347, *et seq.*; vol. iv. p. 271. Vie de Nicole, chap. x. Lettres d'Antoine Arnauld, vol. ii. p. 292. Rec. d'Utrecht, p. 276. Œuvres de Racine, p. 413.

† Lettres de la Mère Angélique, vol. i. pp 113—116.

M. de Perefixe acknowledged her influence as one of the real heads of the house, by selecting her as a victim of his raid in August 1666; and we have already noted* her quiet resolution in captivity. From the time of the reunion of the sisterhood in Port Royal des Champs, she was, in whatever official position, the acknowledged chief. After the Peace, she held for nine years the office of prioress, under La Mère du Fargis, while from 1678 to her death in 1684, she presided over the community as Abbess. Like De Saçi, she knew no life, but life at Port Royal.

La Mère Angélique de St. Jean belongs to that part of her family which, in the elder generation, is represented by Angélique and Antoine Arnauld; for in her, their clear intellect, their eager and firm will, their promptitude of action, were more conspicuous than the gentler excellencies of Agnès, and the Bishop of Angers. It is hard to compare her with her great namesake; for while the latter was the foundress of the reformed Port Royal, the former but perpetuated a rule, which was already firmly established, and had moulded her own character. If we might implicitly trust the eulogies of her contemporaries, it would be difficult to overrate her talents. "Look at me," said D'Andilly, "and at my other children, and at all my brothers; we are every one of us fools, in comparison with Angélique." She has more authorcraft than her aunt; and her letters are perhaps more interesting, except in those rare instances when the elder Angélique, almost forgetting that she is writing at all, opens to the reader an insight into her wide and deep heart. So in her recorded conversation, the niece exhibits herself as more the woman of the world, formed to shine in society; she is ready in repartee, prompt in telling argument; but her sayings assume the form of

* Vol. i. p. 396.

bon-mots, which ill replace the sacred aphorisms, in which her aunt distilled a great spiritual truth into a phrase. To a contemporary, she might have seemed the cleverer of the two; for her talent shone rather on the literary than the practical side, while La Mère Angélique was more prompt to do than to speak. And yet Angélique de St. Jean also could act, when need was. The Duc de Luynes, who married a second wife in his later years, abandoned his house at Vaumurier to the nuns of Port Royal. Not long before Angélique's death, its situation so near, and yet far enough from Versailles, attracted the notice of the Dauphin, who expressed an intention of asking the King to give it him, that he might fit it up for the reception of a mistress. But when the Abbess heard of it, she resolved that no such profanation should approach the sacred solitude; and although the community was already under the royal ban, and permitted only to drag on a lingering existence from day to day, did not hesitate to run the risk of entire extinction. Before the King could ask their property of them for such a purpose, or give it away without their consent, the château of Vaumurier was levelled, by her order, to the ground. If all Louis's Jesuit confessors had been as honest, the realm might have been spared many scandals and many miseries.

Perhaps we do wrong to make Angélique de St. Jean the subject of a comparison, from which, however honourable to herself, she would have been the first to shrink. Whenever a great intellectual or religious movement extends over more than one generation, there is an air of grandeur in the originality of the first to which the second is rarely able to attain. It is chiefly to the younger Angélique that we owe our intimate knowledge of the older Port Royal; the "Mémoires pour Servir," from which I have so often quoted, were in great part written or collected by her hand. Her highest praise is, that the name of Arnauld was not

brought down by her from the height of love and fame to which Angélique and Agnès Arnauld had borne it. If I have read her character aright, she would have desired no other.*

The community were again permitted to proceed to the election of an Abbess. They chose La Mère du Fargis, who had already held that office from 1669 to 1678; and who now presided over the sisterhood till 1690, when she was replaced by Agnès de St. Thekle Racine, the aunt of the poet. The ten years which followed the death of De Saçi were a period of quiet decay. The King, who already had upon his hands the affairs of the Régale, which, widening into the debate of the Four Articles, threatened a schism of the Gallican Church, revoked in 1685 the Edict of Nantes. Struggling on the one side with the Pope, on the other with the Huguenots, he and his favourite counsellor Harlay had no thought to bestow on the petty troubles of Port Royal. His passion for persecution struck at a nobler quarry than this handful of aged women; and sated itself for a while on Protestant tears and blood. So the story of these years may be told in few words. The Archbishop established first his sister, and then his niece, as Abbess of Port Royal de Paris, and the rumour went forth, that the two houses were to be reunited, and the faithful few scattered into various hostile monasteries. Then, one by one, messengers arrived, bringing with them the bodies or the hearts of those, who, living, had been the friends of the sisterhood, and would not be severed from it when death enabled them to laugh at Louis. In 1687 died Hamon; in 1690 Pontchâteau and Ste Marthe; in 1692 the Bishop of Angers, and the last friend of the community who was permitted to end her days at Port

* Mémoires pour Servir, vol. iii. p. 498, *et seq.* "Recueil des Relations ou Mémoires sur la Vie et les Vertus de la Mère Angélique de St. Jean," &c.

Royal, Madlle. de Virtus. In the latter year, finding that their number was reduced below the limit fixed by the Archbishop in 1679, the sisterhood, through their Abbess, La Mère Racine, ventured with but little hope of success to remind him of his promise, that they should again be permitted to receive novices. He was as polite as he had been fourteen years before, but also as stern. There had been some mistake, he said; the number fifty was to include, not only the professed, but the lay sisters; he was grieved to put them off again, but it was the King's will, not his. So the nuns sadly betook themselves once more to patience and prayer, till a still greater grief fell upon them. For, on the 14th of August 1694, they learned that at Brussels, six days before, their oldest and most faithful friend, Antoine Arnauld, had ended his long exile.*

When Arnauld quitted Paris in June 1679, his first place of refuge was Mons, where he was hospitably received in the house of M. Robert, President of the Sovereign Council of Hainault. Nicole, who had anticipated his friend's flight, was already at Brussels, bewailing the hardships of exile, and casting about for some scheme of honourable accommodation with the Archbishop, which should restore him to his country. It is due to him to say that he would gladly have included Arnauld in the amnesty which he procured for himself. We have before seen † what a friendly and generous interpretation the latter put upon Nicole's unwillingness to share the perils and labours of his exile, and how, while keenly feeling his desertion, he manfully defended him against the harsh judgments of the party. He would not try to conciliate the Archbishop, of whose wily courtesy he had the deepest distrust; he knew that he could purchase the right of ending his days in France only at the price of a shameful

* Guilbert, vol. iii. pp. 1—184. † Ante, p. 171.

silence. He wrote to Nicole in August 1679*: "I noticed not long ago two verses in the fourth chapter of Ecclesiasticus, which give us, it seems to me, two great rules; the first a general rule, the second an exception to it. The general rule is: *Noli resistere contra faciem potentis, nec coneris contra ictum fluminis.* 'Resist not the mighty to his face, nor strive against the current of a river.' This is the obligation which human and Christian prudence ordinarily lays upon us. . . . . But note the exception: *Pro justitia agonizare pro anima tua, et usque ad mortem certa pro justitia, et Deus expugnabit pro te inimicos tuos.* 'For justice struggle for thy life, and contend to death for justice, and God shall vanquish thine enemies for thee.'† As if the wise man said, when only your own interests are concerned, yield to him who is stronger than you, and do not, by resisting him, draw down his anger upon yourself; but when the question is of defending the truth, fight for it even to the death, and believe that in so doing you fight for your own soul; and do not fear the hatred of those who would oppress the truth, for God will be your safeguard and will deliver you from your enemies." And again‡: "It is, you say, a great enterprise for a man of my age voluntarily to go into concealment for the rest of his days. On the contrary, *fortem facit vicina libertas senem*,—'the approach of liberty makes the old man strong.' I have much more, it seems to me, to hope from God's mercy in sacrificing to Him what remains of my life, and in exposing myself in the service of the Church to the deprivation of rest and comfort, than if I had bought this repose by visits to the Church's oppressor."

* Lett. d'A. Arnauld, vol. iii. p. 150.

† With Arnauld I quote the Vulgate, which differs in this passage from the English version.

‡ Letter quoted in Vie d'A. Arnauld, vol. ii. p. 120.

In the concluding passage of a "Defence of the New Testament of Mons," which he had been forbidden to publish in France, but which formed the first work of his exile, he finely records his immovable resolution in an address to God*: "Nevertheless, Thy servants will be proscribed, banished, imprisoned. Can, then, a Christian, to whom the whole earth is a prison and a place of exile, be greatly troubled by the change of his dungeon? Thou, my God, art to be found everywhere. Those that possess Thee are, even in bonds, freer than kings themselves. No prison is to be feared, except that of a soul which its own vices and passions hold in chains, and hinder from enjoying the liberty of the sons of God. And this it is which has caused one of Thy saints to say that the conscience of a wicked man is full of a more woful and terrible darkness, not only than all prisons, but even than hell itself — *horrendis et feralibus tenebris omnes non solum carceres, sed etiam inferos vincit scelerati hominis conscientia.*

"But it may well be that we shall die of the fatigues and labours which accompany a wandering life. Will, then, the easiest life avoid death? A little sooner, a little later—what is it in comparison with eternity? Thou hast numbered our days. We came into this world when it pleased Thee, and only when it pleases Thee shall we leave it. The evils of the world are terrible afar off; we accustom ourselves to them when we see them face to face; and Thy grace renders all things endurable, besides that they are always less than our sins deserve. Thou hast taught us by Thy apostle, that all those who serve Thee ought to be willing to say with him, 'I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; everywhere, and in all things, I am instructed both to be full and to

* Quoted by Du Fossé, p. 362.

be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me.'"

To note all Arnauld's changes of residence during his fifteen years' exile, to narrate the various fears which drove him from one place of refuge to another, would be to enter into much unnecessary and uninteresting detail. From Mons, he soon removed to Brussels, where under various circumstances, and at different intervals, he lived more than in any other city. Here he enjoyed for some time the effectual, though unavowed protection of the Spanish governor of the Low Countries. It is a striking proof of that loyalty to Louis XIV., which in 1679 had prevented Arnauld from accepting the invitation of the hostile court of Rome, that in 1683 he begged to be excused from publicly paying his respects to his protector, the Marquis de Grana, on the ground that he represented a king, who at the time waged war upon France. Many cities—Ghent, Tournai, Liège, Courtrai, Antwerp—received the fugitive when the hot pursuit compelled him to seek a fresh hiding-place. He made three visits to Protestant Holland, one of which (1680–82) was of two years' duration. Hither he was attracted by Van Neercassel, who as Bishop of Castoria *in partibus*, governed with the authority of an Archbishop of Utrecht, a Catholic Church, which, becoming imbued with Jansenist doctrine, was finally cast off by the Holy See, but still maintains a precarious existence, and an ambiguous position between the two great divisions of western Christendom.* There is no doubt that however carefully Arnauld might avoid the appearance of sympathy with the enemies of his country, the wars of Europe were his best protection. If we are to credit a statement made

* For further information as to the singular history of the Jansenist Church of Holland, the reader may refer to an interesting volume, lately published by the Rev. J. M. Neale, M.A. "History of the so-called Jansenist Church of Holland," &c. 1858.

by Racine *, in which he is supported by the author of Arnauld's Life †, the moment of our exile's utmost perplexity and peril was in 1689. He had thrown himself into the cause of James II. with his usual impetuosity, and had written a furious pamphlet, which on its very title page compared William of Orange to Absalom, to Cromwell, and to Herod. The Prince, we are told, retorted by requiring all his allies, and especially the King of Spain, to expel Arnauld from their dominions. "It was then," says Racine, "that he found himself in the greatest extremity of his life, France being closed to him by the Jesuits, and every other country by the enemies of France." But it is difficult to believe that William, with the perils of the English Revolution only half overcome, should have leisure to think of Arnauld's attack, or that the Stadtholder, who had borne so long with the free presses of Amsterdam, should show his resentment, if he felt it, in so intemperate and unwise a fashion. The story is disproved, as far as it is capable of disproof, by the fact that Arnauld was not expelled from Brussels in 1689, and that when, a year later, the machinations of the Jesuits compelled him to seek a fresh hiding-place, he found it in the United Provinces, where the influence of William was greater than in England itself.

Throughout these years the King and the Archbishop of Paris pursued him with unrelenting hostility. They chose to take his residence in a foreign country as sufficient evidence of treasonable designs: he, on the other hand, having bought free speech at the heavy price of exile, was not slow to exercise his privilege, and spoke out boldly upon the controversies which agitated the Church of France. It is now difficult to estimate the real peril in which Arnauld stood: but there can be no doubt that he

* Abrégé de l'Histoire de Port Royal, p. 281. † p. 282.

was compelled to put many painful restrictions upon his mode of living, and to assume the appearance of a fugitive from justice, as the condition of the partial protection extended to him by the court of Spain. He was too well inured to such a life, too wont to laugh at vain alarms, to suffer his tranquillity of mind to be affected by them. In 1682 he writes to Angélique de St. Jean: "I should have been dead long ago, if I had been accustomed to alarm myself in regard to many things at which people are greatly alarmed, as if I were about to be discovered and arrested forthwith. I see no symptoms of *that*, and so am freed from many a fear. And even if that were to happen, I do not look upon it as so great an evil; and thus my imagination is never very strongly affected. But above all, I abandon myself to the providence of God. That is my secret for being always gay: and, if I have my little troubles sometimes, I assure you that they do not come from that side." But about this time a trouble fell upon him, which concerned him more nearly than any personal hardship. Some bales of his works, addressed to a priest named Du Bois, were seized at St. Denys. There was nothing in the books which could, by any latitude of interpretation, be construed into sedition; but they bore the name of Arnauld upon the title page, and that was enough. The unfortunate Du Bois, in defiance of law and justice, was sent to the galleys. A second seizure was made at Rouen, which resulted in many arrests. The principal criminal, Père du Breuil, an aged priest, who, but for the adverse influence of Harlay, would have been elected General of the Oratory, was thrown into the Bastille. He already approached his seventieth year: his reputation for ability and virtue was unblemished; but neither his own character, nor the solicitations of his friends, could avail to

* Lettres d'A. Arnauld, vol. ii. p. 262.

procure his release. He was transferred from prison to prison, till he had inhabited seven different dungeons in as many provinces of France. He owed his release at last to no human clemency, but to the Divine Justice,—dying in 1696, two years after Arnauld, in his eighty-fourth year. It was said that about this time, no fewer than eleven persons expiated in prison the crime of having communicated with Arnauld. This was to attack him on the tenderest side. He found in his constant soul, a perennial spring of resolution, which enabled him to bear his own misfortunes; it was far harder to see others suffering, for no greater offence than that of being his friends, and to feel that they were beyond reach of his help, and almost of his sympathy. He did all that he could do; he stood by the prisoners in feeling and in action; he refused to listen to any project of accommodation which concerned him alone. In a noble letter, addressed, in 1683 or 1684, to an unknown correspondent, who is supposed to be the Duc de Roannez *, he says: "Although the loss of the books seized, printed at my expense . . . . is for me, in the state in which I am, a species of ruin, it is nothing in comparison with what I suffer in the persons of my friends, who, for their share in this matter, are imprisoned or exiled. However hard this trial may be to a heart like that which God has given me for my friends, I receive it at His hands, as a favour for them, and an act of merciful justice for me; and this, joined to the submission which I owe to the commands of Providence, without which no hair of our heads falls, prevents me from murmuring against those who inflict suffering upon these persons for me, and upon me in them . . . . But even if the Archbishop should have given all necessary guarantees, and I could venture to appear in France, it seems to

* Lettres d'A. Arnauld, vol. iv. p. 34.

me that no man of honour could advise me to leave my retreat, as long as those who suffer for me are kept in prison, or compelled to concealment. Permit me, sir, to tell you all my thoughts. It would be very sweet to me to see my other friends once more: but with what front could I be at ease and at liberty, so long as these persons suffered, either in exile or in prison? And how, to procure some measure of repose and security in the little time which I have yet to live, could I resolve to show myself, dragging on, at seventy-three years, a useless and shameful old age, in the midst of my suffering and forsaken friends, and of my triumphant enemies?"

Arnauld's literary activity during the fifteen years of his exile, was incessant. For one to whom free speech was the very breath of the nostrils, there could be no doubt that this secret, changeful, half-perilous life was tenfold better than the lettered ease which Nicole had earned by submission and silence. Banished, proscribed, hunted from city to city, his name a by-word, his friendship a crime, "the old man eloquent" was yet a power in the Church, whose words possessed the faculty of rousing the impotent wrath of King and Jesuit. It would be impossible to enumerate in this place even the titles of his numerous works. In the cause of what he conceived to be truth, his hand was against every man. "I have no friend," he said, "against whom I am not ready to write, if changing his opinions, he declared himself against any important truths of religion; I have no personal enemy whose defence I am not ready to undertake, if I see that it is the part of justice."* So when Nicole propounded his theory of general grace; when Malebranche deduced from the Cartesian philosophy conclusions which seemed irreconcilable with Catholic doctrine, each encountered in

* Quoted by Ste Beuve, Port Royal, vol. v. p. 191.

Arnauld a friendly, but firm opponent. He wrote a defence of the New Testament of Mons against the attack of a M. Mallet; and when the latter in a further work denied the right of the laity to read the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue, maintained in a second reply, the opposite doctrine with an overwhelming force of argument and authority. He took occasion from the Popish Plot to write an "Apology for the Catholics," in which, while proving the innocence of Oates's victims, he made reprisals upon the Protestants, which involved him in a sharp debate with his Huguenot fellow-countrymen. He pursued, as opportunity offered, the old controversy of grace, and endeavoured once more to show that Jansenism was but a phantom called up by the excited imagination of the Molinists. He added to two volumes on "The Practical Morality of the Jesuits" which had been compiled by M. de Pontchâteau, six others, in which he examined the conduct of the Society, especially in the management of the foreign missions, which have won for it so wide a reputation. But besides these, a long list of pamphlets, memoirs, appeals, remonstrances, as well as a voluminous correspondence, remain to testify of his marvellous industry. Whatever truth of morals, or philosophy, or religion was assailed, he was ready to break a lance of controversy with the assailant. Wherever a wrong was inflicted, his pen was the sword of the injured.

It would however be dishonest not to confess that, like Françis de Sales, neither Arnauld's sympathies nor his sense of justice could pass the line which divides the Catholic from the Protestant Church. Both in his "Apology for the Catholics," and in one or two works on the Calvinistic system which date from this period, he attacked, in language which admits of no defence, those who were divided from himself by a very narrow region of faith. Nor had the persecution which he suffered taught him

the lessons of liberty; he approved from his banishment the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and saw nothing unjust or oppressive in the King's treatment of his Protestant subjects. We cannot explain this by the supposition of subserviency to the royal will and policy; for Arnauld stoutly maintained the Papal side in the quarrel of the Régale. Something may be ascribed to the desire which he felt in common with the other Jansenist leaders, to be able to rebut the charge of Calvinism, by pointing to his controversial exertions against the Calvinists; but far more to the fatal influence of his Church, and its theory of exclusive salvation. He was true in adversity, to the belief of his prosperous days. Even persecution could not teach him his own folly and wickedness. In saying that he was a Catholic whose consistency withstood the severest tests, we have admitted all. But to watch Arnauld from the midst of his proscription for truth's sake, hailing with satisfaction the banishment of thousands of his fellow-countrymen, for a faithfulness like his own, is to detect an ugly smear upon the face of a noble picture. The sympathies of any Protestant biographer must change sides, and applaud Jurieu, as he reminds his opponent that he owes to the forbearance of Protestant Holland, that very liberty of person and speech, which he uses to insult the misfortunes of the Protestants of France.

In September, 1690, Arnauld returned for the last time to Brussels; no other city seemed to offer so safe an asylum. He had never been without companions in his wanderings; M. Ruth d'Ans, a good priest who had formerly been attached to Port Royal des Champs; Quesnel, Arnauld's successor in the leadership of the party; M. Duguet, a confessor, who preserved for the second generation of Jansenists, the traditions of the first; M. Guelphe, who for many years rendered Arnauld faithful service as his secretary; — were with him, though

probably never all at one time. "The household," says Quesnel*, "was like a little monastery, where prayers, the divine office, the mass, work, meals, conversation, and other exercises, followed regularly at the appointed hours." Arnauld, who notwithstanding his great age, rose at five, or sometimes half an hour later, was scrupulously exact in daily reciting the whole of the breviary at the times prescribed by the Church. Every morning he said mass in his private chapel. He had so arranged the lessons, as to read the whole of the Bible in each year. The portion of the day not occupied by prayer, or set apart for meals, was divided between study and conversation. Exercise was hardly possible; for the last four years of his life, Arnauld never passed his threshold, except to take an occasional walk in a little courtyard, over which an awning was stretched, to protect him from prying eyes. Such a privation naturally told upon his health, and increased the infirmities of old age; but neither the little ailments which harassed him almost without intermission, nor the more serious evil of the gradual loss of sight, disturbed his equanimity, or prevailed with him to lower the weapons, and cease the warfare of his life. I have before told how, when Nicole urged him to rest, he replied, "Rest? have I not all eternity to rest in?" — so now, when failing eyesight warned him of approaching death, he went steadily on with his work, only taking the precaution of committing to memory such of the Psalms, as he did not already know by heart. His pen was busy to the last; a few days before he died, he finished a work on pulpit eloquence. On Sunday, August 1st, 1694, he was attacked by a bad cold, which did not however prevent him from rising at the usual hour, and saying mass, on the two subsequent days. Then he took to his bed; in the night of Saturday the

* Histoire Abrégé, &c. p. 271.

7th, he received the sacraments; and about a quarter of an hour after midnight, "a sigh told us that he slept in the Lord; more like a little one who goes to sleep in its mother's bosom, than a sinner, who pays the penalty of sin." He had passed his eighty-second year.

That Arnauld was dead, soon became known in Paris; but where he died, and the place of his burial, was long a secret. Presently it was put on record, that on the second night after his death, Wilhelm Van den Nesle, Priest of the parish church of St. Catherine at Brussels, received his body from his friends, and laid it in the vault of the Van Stenhoul family, which is under the steps of the greater altar, in the above named church. It happened, that the pavement of the chancel had been taken up for some purpose of repair, so that in the morning no trace remained to betray the secret of the midnight burial. There the great Augustinian doctor still lies, without monument or epitaph. And yet not for want of affectionate poetical memorial; Racine wrote two epitaphs, another was the work of Boileau. The honours of the friendly competition remained with the satirist, who forgot, in his sorrow and indignation, that he was only a Molino-Jansenist.

"Au pied de cet autel, de structure grossière,
Gît sans pompe, enfermé dans une vile bière,
Le plus savant mortel qui jamais ait écrit : :
Arnauld, qui sur la grace instruit par Jésus Christ,
Combattant pour l'Église, a, dans l'Église même,
Souffert plus d'un outrage, et plus d'un anathème.
Plein du feu qu'en son cœur souffla l'Esprit divin,
Il terrassa Pélage, il foudroya Calvin,
De tous les faux docteurs confondit la morale.
Mais, pour fruit de son zèle, on l'a vu rebuté,
En cent lieux opprimé par leur noire cabale,
Errant, pauvre, banni, proscrit, persécuté,

Et même par sa mort, leur fureur mal éteinte,
N'aurait jamais laissé ses cendres en repos,
Si Dieu lui-même ici de son ouaille sainte
A ces loups dévorants n'avait caché les os."*

In November, Arnauld's heart was brought to Port Royal, where it was reverently received, and laid in the cemetery, now growing sadly rich in holy earth. The verses, placed upon the stone which covered it are worth quotation, both for their own sake, and on account of the quarrel to which they gave rise. Their author, Santeul, a canon of St. Victor, at Paris, who in these latter years had ventured to contract a friendship with Port Royal, was harassed by the Jesuits into a half-retractation of some expressions in the epitaph; and hardly knew whether he liked least the discontent of his Jesuit or the laughter of his Jansenist friends. The verses, which were evidently written under the impulse of real feeling, are far more interesting than the many half-jocose, half-serious poems of which they were the occasion:

"Ad sanctas rediit sedes, ejectus et exul,
Hoste triumphato, tot tempestatibus actus,
Hoc portu in placido, hac sacrâ tellure quiescit
Arnaldus, veri defensor, et arbiter æqui.
Illius ossa memor sibi vindicet extera tellus:
Huc cœlestis amor rapidis cor transtulit alis,
Cor nunquam avulsum, nec amatis sedibus absens."†

It has been in many ways unfortunate for Arnauld's fame that he represents the controversial side of French

* Œuvres de Boileau, vol. ii. p. 336.

† Vie d'A. Arnauld, vol. ii. p. 371. I must except from this criticism three lines in a piece entitled *Sanctolius Pœnitens*, which was anonymously published by Rollin. They seem to me to characterise Arnauld in the happiest way:—

"Sancte senex, pleno qui nunc de flumine verum
Ipsum illud, quod sic terris peregrinus amâsti,
Ore avido bibis, atque odiorum oblivia potas."

Jansenism. His works, which fill no fewer than forty-two volumes, and the bare enumeration of whose titles occupies twenty-three octavo pages, are little more than contributions to every religious and philosophical debate which agitated his age and country. Even the "Book of Frequent Communion," which produced practical effects so singular and so wide-spread, was the occasion of a storm. The "Art of Thinking," and the "General Grammar," are almost the only productions of Arnauld's pen which were not polemical, either in their intention or result. Hardly any writer, at once so industrious and so able, has bequeathed to posterity so little of permanent interest and value. Even in some of the great controversies, which occupied all his life, the garland of fame was won by others: "La Perpetuité de la Foi," the chief monument of the Protestant debate on the Eucharist, was the work of Nicole; and the "Provincial Letters" represent for all time the moral polemic which Port Royal carried on against the Jesuits. And it is precisely on the controversial side that Jansenism halts between Catholic and Protestant sympathies, and fails to secure the unhesitating approval of either. Catholic and Protestant alike may find a ground of moral agreement in Port Royal; but while the former necessarily condemns the long resistance to authority, the latter withholds his full approbation from what was after all only a half rebellion. Why should not Port Royal, asks the Catholic critic, have humbly submitted to the decision of the Pope, and thus, freed from the reproach of incipient Protestantism, have successfully continued its work of moral reform? "Why," asks Melchior Leydecker, the Protestant biographer of Jansen, "have not these excellent men, condemned by the Pope, afflicted by the Jesuits, and weighed upon by an intolerable yoke which prevents all liberty of conscience, long ago come out with us?" The fame of

Arnauld has suffered because, of all the Port Royalists, he is most obnoxious to this double reproach. The Catholic, singling out for praise his devotion to the doctrine and discipline of the Church, bewails a pertinacious and contentious love of truth, which placed him in a perpetual attitude of protest against its decrees. The Protestant, owning kindred aspirations after liberty of thought and conscience, complains that they were carried to none but a "lame and impotent conclusion." Only a Jansenist—or, if such could be found, a Christian historian who could rise to an impartial height of judgment above Catholicism and Protestantism alike — can render full justice to Arnauld.

His mind was active, versatile, acute, rather than creative; his unbounded talent raised him to a high place among authors of the second class; the absence of original genius barred his access to the first. Unlike Pascal, whose thought was all self-developed, Arnauld seemed to require material on which to work. So he was a disciple of Des Cartes in philosophy, of St. Cyran in religion. When once the subject-matter however small was provided, when once the impulse however slight was given, his busy intellect could adapt, modify, add, develope. But as no man pursued truth with a more entire devotion, none professed a more careless allegiance to the decisions of a master. Thus, in a secondary sense, his works are original; though capable of being classified with others as the productions of a school, in conception, method, execution, they are all his own. Arnauld's style corresponds with this estimate of his intellectual powers. It expresses his meaning clearly and strongly; and that is all. He has no time to delay upon his words, and make them, in addition to this, an elegant vehicle of his thought; he lacks the artistic faculty which, by a happy intuition, always seizes upon the right words at first. Whenever any single passage is

conspicuous for a more nervous conciseness, a more fortunate choice of phrase, it is always one which has been fused into its comparatively perfect form by the heat of moral conviction. When an unpopular truth is to be defended, a perversion of right to be assailed, and Arnauld stands, one against a thousand, on the side of God and duty, his sentences assume a certain severe and majestic beauty, which raises them to the nobleness of their work.

But the great doctor of Port Royal is not to be judged by any mere rules of literary criticism. His words were weapons, and the question is, not whether they are pleasant to be read after the lapse of a century and a half has stilled the warfare which gave them birth, but whether, when first uttered, they did the work which they were designed to do, thoroughly and well. We estimate his controversial volumes as we judge state papers; we ask whether they repelled attack, or conciliated opposition, or produced conviction. And therefore it is, in this case, more difficult than usual to distinguish between the author and the man; without his literary activity, Arnauld becomes the shadow of a great name; while on the other hand, all Arnauld is in his books. His sincere and manly piety, his irrepressible aspiration after truth, his impatience of moral laxity or perversity, his transparent candour, his warm and generous affections, his immovable adherence to a good cause, his utter contempt of selfish considerations in comparison with the fullest performance of duty, guide his pen and his life alike. Who will attempt to fix the point at which the love of truth may become disputatious, or the vehemence of moral indignation overstep the bounds of charity? I confess, that I think Arnauld was right on every occasion on which he differed from the other friends of Port Royal, except one, and that was when Pascal wished to go still farther than he. And so, of all Port Royalists, he comes nearest to the Protestant ideal of logical, consistent truthfulness. Let it be taken as

sufficient proof of the goodness of his heart, that sixty years of controversy did not make him arrogant, and that to the last he could give and receive the wounds of wordy warfare, with unfailing good temper.

Arnauld's life was brightest at the last; his exile was a crown of glory to his old age. Every noble quality which he possessed seemed to be burnished by this trial to an unwonted lustre. The calm resolution with which, in his sixty-eighth year, he prepared to encounter an exile which involved both poverty and peril, rather than be silent in face of wrong; his reliance upon the strength which the old man draws from the approach of liberty; his Christian interpretation of the heathen maxim that every country is the brave man's home; his punctilious loyalty to the King, who, could he have set his foot upon him, would have crushed him like a noxious reptile; the careless independence with which, in defiance of Louis and Innocent alike, he took what appeared to him the right side in the Gallican debates; his magnanimous defence of Nicole; his resolve to accept no terms of accommodation which did not include all his fellowsufferers; his unceasing activity under every circumstance which might contribute to reduce him to inaction; his chivalrous advocacy of all neglected or impugned truth; the cheerful patience with which for fifteen years he bore the hardships of his wandering life, bating "not a jot of heart or hope," but still confident in the final victory of his faith; — make up a portrait, the lineaments of which assume an heroic grandeur and symmetry. If no citizen of Brussels knows that in that obscure lodging, Antoine Arnauld, homeless, poor, proscribed, expatriate, has passed to God, thousands through Catholic Europe confess by their tears that they have lost a teacher and a friend, honoured, revered, beloved as few men are. He has far overpassed the ordinary limits of man's life; he has kept to the last his strength of mind and body and will;

he has made no selfish compromise with wrong; he has concluded no cowardly peace with error. What more is needed to make a fortunate death? Let us solemnly lower our flag for a moment over the nameless grave of the great captain of Port Royal, and then pass sadly on to watch the destruction of the citadel, in whose defence he died.*

In August 1695, exactly a year after Arnauld, died Harlay, suddenly and without the sacraments. He too was an old man, who had not altogether attained the object of his ambition, for he died without the Cardinal's hat, which was to have been the reward of his Gallican zeal. He had offended Madame de Maintenon by opposing himself to the publication of her marriage with the King, and found, when the stream of ecclesiastical preferment flowed through another channel, that the crowd in his ante-chamber grew less numerous and less respectful. His successor in the Archbishopric was M. de Noailles, Bishop of Chalons-sur-Marne, who in 1705, was elevated to the dignity of Cardinal. He was of distinguished birth, being the brother of the Duc de Noailles; exemplary in the purity of his private life and the attention which he paid to the affairs of his diocese. It is said that he desired his new honours so

* Histoire de la Vie et des Ouvrages de M. Arnauld, p. 146, *et seq.* Vie d'A. Arnauld, vol. ii. p. 112, *et seq.* St^e Beuve, Port Royal, vol. v. p. 134, *et seq.* When Charles Perrault published in 1696, his "Éloges" of one hundred of the most distinguished men of the age of Louis XIV., accompanied by their portraits, he was forbidden — after the book had been printed, and the portraits engraved — to include in the number Arnauld and Pascal. The portion of the book which referred to them was suppressed: though it was restored in the second edition, published in Holland in 1697, and the third, printed at Paris in 1701. Men recalled the words in which Tacitus spoke (Ann. lib. iii. c. 76,) of the funeral of Junia the wife of C. Cassius, the sister of M. Brutus, at which the images of Cassius and Brutus were not suffered to be displayed: "*Sed præfulgebant Cassius atque Brutus, eo ipso, quod effigies eorum non visebantur.*" "Cassius and Brutus were the more conspicuous from the very fact that their effigies were not seen." It would be difficult to find a more apt and biting application of classic phrase. — *Vie d'A. Arnauld*, p. 491.

little, as to have attempted to rouse the opposition of the Jesuits to his nomination by signifying a public approval of that famous book, Quesnel's "Moral Reflections," which, in the second period of the Jansenist debate, holds the same place as the "Augustinus" in the first. St. Simon explains the appointment, by the statement that for once Père la Chaise was not consulted, and that Noailles owed his promotion to Madame de Maintenon's sole influence. It was a bitter day for him when he left the happy obscurity of his provincial bishopric, to assume the perilous administration of the metropolitan diocese. He was an honest man, who wished to hold the balance between contending parties fairly; but who had neither the strength of will needful for the maintenance of such a position, nor the smooth subtlety which Harlay substituted in its place. He excited Jansenist hopes, which he was unable to fulfil, and yet failed, even by his severity, to conciliate the confidence of the Jesuits. Cruelty from him was felt at Port Royal to be doubly cruel; while La Chaise and Le Tellier looked upon him as little better than a Port Royalist in disguise. His was the hardest of all fates; to be the instrument of a fanaticism with which he had no sympathy; to inflict the wrongs, and to suffer the remorse of a persecutor, though never animated by the fiery zeal of persecution.*

The events of the five or six years which followed the accession of the new Archbishop, are but few. La Mère Racine presided over the community from 1690 to 1699, when she was replaced by La Mère Boulard de Ninvilliers, the last Abbess of Port Royal. Death followed death in melancholy succession: as Arnauld had said†, "The house of God seems to be destroyed, but it is re-edified elsewhere. The stones are cut here, but it is that they may be placed in the heavenly temple." In 1695 died Lancelot and

* St. Simon, vol. ii. pp. 112—117.

† Quoted by St^e Beuve, vol. v. p. 125.

Nicole; in 1696, Pascal's friends, Domat and De Roannez; in 1698 Tillemont and Du Fossé; in 1699 Racine. The community grew smaller every year; one by one the aged women, whose profession dated from the days of La Mère Angélique, dropped away, till the thin ranks could no longer fulfil the laborious round of service, and were compelled to ask the help of certain "sisters of the white veil," who took the places of the dead, yet were not united in community of rule with the living. In 1700 La Mère Racine followed the nephew, whose alienation from the house had cost her so much grief; whose faithful and affectionate service during these weary years must have been her joy and pride. The same year witnessed the departure of the last Arnauld, Marie Angélique, daughter of D'Andilly, who had been the companion of La Mère Agnès in her captivity, and, yielding to the fatal eloquence of Bossuet, had signed the Formulary. One hundred and one years have passed since Henri IV. made Angélique Arnauld Abbess of Port Royal des Champs.

The virtues of the new Archbishop excited at Port Royal a fresh and illusive hope. He received the congratulations which the nuns offered through Racine, with a courtesy which at least seemed sincere, and bade the poet draw up for his instruction a narrative of the reform and misfortunes of the house. A visit which he made to Port Royal in 1697, added one more to the long list of eulogies which the monastic virtue of the community compelled even from its oppressors; and is said to have induced him to suggest to Louis the withdrawal of the prohibition to receive novices. But the request, if ever preferred, was preferred in vain. When Madame de Harlay, Abbess of Port Royal de Paris, emboldened by the weakness of the rival house, impudently sued in the courts of law, for a revision of the decree which had divided the conventual property; M. de Noailles stead-

fastly upheld the cause of Port Royal des Champs, and rejoiced when justice was done. Madame de Harlay, not long before, had given a ball in the parlour of her convent: "It was not fair," said the Archbishop, "that Port Royal de Paris should dance, and Port Royal des Champs pay for the music." And others, remembering the shameless extravagance of one house, the modest frugality of the other, recalled the story of the foolish virgins, who, when they had no oil in their lamps, would willingly have drawn upon the resources of the wise.*

But the fate of Port Royal rested with the King, not with the Archbishop: and Louis's fanatical hatred of Jansenism strengthened as he grew old. It had once been more than half political; now it was almost wholly religious. Under the influence of Madame de Maintenon, religion had become the fashion at Versailles; and the form of the King's convictions was necessarily determined by his Jesuit advisers. I do not know where to look for any proof of Madame de Maintenon's special enmity to Port Royal, nor do I believe that it exists. She directed through her own channels, as far as she could, the ecclesiastical promotions of the kingdom; she spent upon St. Cyr all the resources of her private influence and energy; and so left her husband and Père la Chaise to exercise against Port Royal a severity, which she made no effort to avert or to mollify. We gain more than one glimpse of the King's personal feelings during the period of the last persecution by help of St. Simon's caustic pen. In 1699, Madame de Grammont, who to English readers is best known as La Belle Hamilton, spent a few days at Port Royal. She was a favourite at court; almost the only one of Louis's female friends who was not a friend of his wife's, and to whom he testified friendship even in her

* Guilbert, vol. iii. pp. 225—305. Du Fossé, p. 477, *et seq.*

despite. Up to this time, she had always been one of that mysteriously select and delightful company, who followed the King to Marli when he was weary of the royal pomp of Versailles. Now she was left out: "Those who go to Port Royal," said Louis, "do not come to Marli." But Madame de Grammont, who was bold enough to speak her mind even to the King, regained her place in the inner circle without any treason to Port Royal. She told him of her obligations to the house; how, when her parents had fled from England during the troubles of the civil war, La Mère Angélique had not only given them substantial help, but had taken herself into the convent, and fed, and clothed, and taught her, out of pure charity. But the King would not hear her when she began to speak of the piety, the virtue, the loyalty of the community. "I have my reasons for acting as I do," was all the explanation which he vouchsafed. Still, when Madame de Grammont next went to Marli the victory remained with her: she had told a king the truth, and had eluded the jealousy of a king's wife, who had more than the power of a mistress.*

If we may trust another anecdote which St. Simon records, even Louis was not without his intervals of hesitation and repentance. About the end of 1703 or the beginning of 1704, Maréchal, who had held for about a year the office of first surgeon to the King, was asked to visit at Port Royal, a nun who suffered under some disease of the leg, which seemed to render amputation necessary. He had already consented, when a friend, more worldly wise than himself, advised him to ask the King's permission, before having anything to do with the suspected community. Maréchal, who could not see what it mattered to the King whether he went to decide upon the amputation of a nun's leg or not, was prevailed upon to take the

* Guilbert, vol. iii. p. 266. St. Simon, vol. iv. p. 117; vol. vii. p. 41; vol. xi. p. 143.

prudent course, only by the importunities of his adviser. "At the name of Port Royal," says St. Simon, "the King drew himself up, as he was wont to do when he heard what displeased him, and remained for the space of two or three paternosters without reply, seriously reflecting; then said to Maréchal, 'I am willing that you should go, but on condition that you go at once, so as to have time to spare; that under pretext of curiosity you see all the house, and the nuns in the choir, and everywhere else that you can; that you make them talk, and examine everything closely, and that to-night you give me an account.' Maréchal, still more astonished, went his way, saw everything, and did all that was demanded of him. His return was awaited with impatience; the King frequently inquired for him, and kept him, when he came, more than an hour, asking questions, and hearing his tale. Maréchal did nothing but praise Port Royal; he said to the King that the first word addressed to him was, to ask for news of the King's health, and that the question was often repeated; that nowhere did they so earnestly pray for him — a fact of which he had himself been a witness in the services of the choir. He admired the charity, the patience, the penitence which he had noticed; he added that he had never been in any house, the piety and holiness of which had made so great an impression upon him. The end of the story was a sigh from the King, who said that they were holy women, who had been too hardly pressed, whose obstinacy and ignorance of facts had not been treated gently enough, and in whose case, matters had been pushed too far."* But the royal sigh was the expression of a feeling almost as transitory as itself. A year or two afterwards, the Duke of Orleans, who was about to take the command of an army in Spain, proposed to the King, that M. de Fontpertuis

* St. Simon, vol. vii. p. 39.

should accompany him as a member of his staff. "'How, my nephew,' answered the King with emotion; 'the son of that mad woman, who ran after Arnauld everywhere? A Jansenist! I won't have any such person with you.' 'Ma foi, Sire,' answered M. d'Orleans, 'I don't know what the mother did: but for the son to be called a Jansenist! he does not even believe that there is a God!' 'Is it possible?' replied the King; 'and do you assure me of that? In that case there is no harm, you may take him.'" St. Simon might well add, that the Duke of Orleans told the tale everywhere, and never without laughing till he cried. The force of sectarian hatred has rarely gone so far, and could not go further. This single story explains the fate of Port Royal.*

In 1702, at the re-election of La Mère Boulard, it appeared that the number of nuns had dwindled to thirty-one, of whom five, either from sickness or old age, were inmates of the infirmary. And now a new debate arose on the old subject of signature. What was called the famous "Case of Conscience" — famous at least in this, that its history was written in eight volumes — was published in 1702, and excited a controversy as bitter as that which had raged forty years before. A doubt had arisen in the minds of some scrupulous theologians, relying on certain briefs which Innocent XII. had addressed to the Bishops of the Low Countries, as to whether it might not be possible for one, who, condemning the incriminated doctrine of Jansen, maintained only a respectful silence in regard to the "fait," to sign the Formulary with a good conscience. Jansenist opinions upon this nice point differed; the question was referred to many theologians, and, among others, to M. Eustace, confessor of Port Royal, who, throwing it into the form of a "Case of Conscience,"

* St. Simon, vol. x. p. 12; conf. vol. xi. p. 63.

procured the opinions of forty doctors of the Sorbonne. Then, after a few months, the "Case of Conscience," with a prefatory letter conceived in a most artful or injudicious spirit of aggression, was published. It is not now known whether the publication was the act of an enemy or of a foolish friend. To moot the question involved in the "Case of Conscience" was, from the Jansenist side, so manifestly unwise, that for a time the whole affair was believed to be a Jesuit plot, which had for its object the renewal of hostilities. The unfortunate confessor, who was the unwitting author of the controversy, found it expedient to leave Port Royal to avoid the Bastille or a *lettre-de-cachet;* and spent the rest of his life in the Abbey of Orval, where, under a feigned name, and practising the severest self-mortification, he bewailed the imprudence which had caused the destruction of the community which he would have sacrificed everything to preserve.

The excitement to which the "Case of Conscience" gave rise ran through the whole Church of France, and produced the due result of papal briefs, episcopal declarations, and royal decrees. Pope, Archbishop, and King were heartily allied against the Jansenists; thirty-nine out of the forty doctors were induced, by harsh or gentle measures, to retract their signatures; the fortieth, M. Petitpied, was expelled from the Sorbonne, like Arnauld before him, and exiled to Beaune. But although the King reissued his decree of 1668 *, forbidding the continuance of party warfare, and the use of party names, the quarrel was not appeased. At last, the only resource seemed to be a papal bull, to procure which Madame de Maintenon is said to have used her influence with the King of Spain. It was published in July 1705, and is known by its initial words as the Bull *Vineam Domini*

* Vol. i. p. 436.

Sabaoth. Like many more documents of its kind, it was ambiguous in its terms; and, though decidedly anti-Jansenist, was interpreted to mean more and less by the contending parties. With its influence upon the later phases of the Jansenist controversy, we have in this place nothing to do; our sole concern with it is as a pretext for demanding of the nuns of Port Royal a fresh and unconditional signature.*

While the "Case of Conscience" was still agitating the public mind, an event of some importance in the general history of Jansenism roused all the King's prejudices and suspicions to renewed activity. Quesnel, the indefatigable leader of the Jansenist party, was arrested at Brussels in May 1703, by order of the King of Spain, and thrown into the prison of the Archbishop of Mechlin. He soon escaped; but left behind him all his papers. The secret correspondence of many years was unveiled to hostile eyes; the ciphers, the *noms de guerre*, the unaccomplished schemes of the party, all discovered. Louis and his Jesuit counsellors had forced Jansenism into habits of concealment and intrigue; now they exclaimed that a great plot against church and state had been brought to light. One paper, containing the terms upon which "the disciples of St. Augustine" were disposed to conclude a peace with D'Avaux, the King's plenipotentiary in Holland, about the year 1684,—a document which it is impossible to regard in any other light than as a very clumsy piece of pleasantry,—especially excited the King's anger. What plainer proof that the Jansenists were a firmly compacted party, than that they actually contemplated independent negotiations at a congress which was to determine the peace of Europe? The truth lay midway between Louis's angry suspicions, and Arnauld's persistent assertion

* Guilbert, vol. iii. p. 357, *et seq.* Guettée, vol. xi. p. 203, *et seq.* St^e^ Beuve, vol. v. pp. 521—526.

that Jansenism was only a "phantom." Every year it grew more difficult to prove the orthodoxy and obedience of a party which successive Popes persisted in stigmatising as heretical and rebellious. Every year persecution, supported by an overwhelming force of authority, arrayed against itself a more secret organisation, a more tortuous system of intrigue. But it may be questioned whether Louis XIV. had any right to blame Quesnel for using disguises, which his own policy had rendered necessary, or to wonder that modes of thought, which he had made penal, should shun the day, in order to evade the penalty.*

The bull *Vineam Domini* was received by the Assembly of the French clergy, which was sitting in 1705, and a 'mandement' for its publication at once issued by the Archbishop. It was the business of the rural deans to make the 'mandement' known throughout the diocese; but either through accident or design, the Dean of Châteaufort, in whose district was Port Royal des Champs, did not receive a copy. Here the matter rested till March, 1706, when the Archbishop began to inquire how the nuns had received the bull, and the accompanying 'mandement.' On being acquainted with the facts of the case, he at once sent both documents to Port Royal by the hands of the confessor M. Marignier, and demanded a certificate signed by the abbess and the confessor, that they had been duly read and accepted. The nuns, knowing that such certificates had not been asked from other religious houses in the diocese except the monastery of Gif, a foundation near their own, which was also supposed to be tainted with Jansenism, stood upon their guard. On the 21st of March, the bull was read at Port Royal; and the following certificate, identical, except in the last clause, with

* Ste Beuve, vol. v. p. 528.

that required by the Archbishop, was signed by M. Marignier, and, with the necessary alterations, by the abbess: —

"The bull and ordinance above have been read and published by me, the undersigned priest, lawfully appointed to the oversight of the nuns, who have declared that they receive them with the respect due to His Holiness and His Eminence; *without prejudice to what was done in regard to them at the Peace of the Church under Pope Clement IX.* This 21st day of March, 1706."

At this point the community took their stand. Their friends besought, the Archbishop alternately entreated and threatened them, in vain. They thought that the certificate without the conditional clause, would be interpreted as a condemnation of the holy abbesses, the learned and pious doctors, whose lives were the glory of their house. Sooner than seem to abandon the ground which had been won for them by the Peace of the Church, they would risk extinction.*

It is hard to decide at what point, if at all, in the history of Port Royal, a justifiable resistance to oppressive authority passes into a self-willed contentiousness. Perhaps from the very beginning, the attempt to reconcile a certain liberty of judgment with an alleged respect for papal and episcopal decisions, was so far illogical as to take it beyond the reach of ordinary rules of criticism. We must leave it to Catholic casuists to determine the extent to which a Catholic conscience, relying upon itself, may rightly resist the authoritative declarations of the Pope. In this instance the more moderate friends of Port Royal might point to the ambiguous language of the bull; to the cautious terms of the mandement; to the fact that no individual signature was required of the nuns; to the hopelessness—almost the absurdity of the resistance offered

* Histoire Abrégée de la Dernière Persécution de P. R., vol. i. p. 78. Guilbert, vol. iii. pp. 377, 398, *et seq.*

by a few aged women, unversed in the subtleties of theology, and ignorant of the ways of the world, to Pope, and King, and the Gallican clergy, represented in their Assembly. And yet the nuns might reply that these very things constituted the artfulness of the trap, into which they were asked to fall. The signature of the unconditional certificate was made as easy as might be; but could anyone doubt that it would be hailed as a triumph over Port Royal, and the Peace of the Church? Would they not, in giving up the little that was asked of them, in fact give up everything? And to what purpose? The certificate rightly signed, would not remove the King's prejudices, or salve the ancient rancour of the Jesuits, or even buy back the right of recruiting their wasted ranks by the reception of fresh novices. Was it then not better to die, if death were inevitable, with a conscience clear of any concession which La Mère Angélique would have pronounced shameful? Why sully the fair fame of a century's devotion to truth, by a few months' safety, earned by acquiescence in possible error? So the sorely diminished band was faithful to the last, and nobly prepared to die with arms in their hands.

To some death was very near; first, on the 14th of April, Sœur de Bernières, Subprioress, the daughter of an old and faithful friend, was taken; then on the 20th the Abbess followed her. But when the Abbess died, the Prioress was in the agonies of death; while six days afterwards Sœur le Feron, one of the oldest and ablest of the community, also passed away. These repeated blows would have left the sisterhood without a head, had not La Mère Boulard, in her last moments, nominated to the office of prioress, so soon to be vacant, Sœur Louise Dumesnil. She is henceforward the only successor of Angélique and Agnès Arnauld; for the Archbishop refused his sanction to the election of a new abbess.

The prohibition to receive novices had hitherto been no more than the verbal expression of the King's will; now, in the midst of their trouble, came a formal decree, ringing the death-knell of the community. Meanwhile, Port Royal de Paris, poor in everything but royal and episcopal patronage, was casting a hungry eye upon the revenues of her more frugal sister; and thought that the present was an auspicious time for renewing the claims, the previous failure of which has been already noticed. About the end of 1706, the community, through their Prioress, presented a petition to the King, who answered it by issuing a commission to inspect and report upon the property of the two houses. The visits of inquiry were made in January 1707; on the 9th of February, a decree was published, sequestrating from the scanty income of Port Royal des Champs, the sum of 6000 livres, for the use of the rival house; and forbidding the persecuted sisterhood to retain more than ten persons in their service under any pretext whatever. The nuns of the choir were now seventeen, the lay sisters, nine; and the number of inhabitants of Port Royal des Champs was therefore strictly limited to thirty-six. In consequence of this decree, eighteen persons, whose help was almost necessary to the infirm and aged sisterhood, were expelled from the monastery.*

But Port Royal de Paris, not satisfied with this partial victory, presented a second petition to the King, praying for the total suppression of the heretical community. Louis referred the matter, as one that wholly concerned the authorities of the Church, to the Archbishop, who prepared to take action upon it, by appointing a commission of inquiry. Port Royal des Champs, even in its best days, was somewhat prolix in protest, petition, and appeal;

* Guilbert, vol. iii. p. 482, *et seq.*; vol. iv. pp. 107, 143, 164, 185. Dernière Persécution, vol. i. pp. 120, *et seq.* 158, 159.

now, the nuns defended every inch of ground with remonstrances and memoirs which fill volumes of the conventual annals, and almost hide the facts of the case in a cloud of eager, despairing, but quite fruitless words. For a time, however, they succeeded in staying the Archbishop's proceedings, by an appeal to the superior court at Lyons, and so compelled him to have recourse to other methods of attack. In September, their last faithful confessor, M. Havant, was sent away; and two priests of St. Nicholas du Chardonnet were entrusted with the task of arguing or persuading them into the unconditional acceptance of the bull. Their mission was unsuccessful, and the community was once more deprived of the sacraments; first verbally on the 3rd of October, then by a regular decree, on the 18th of November. Fresh memorials, and a renewed appeal to Lyons, were their answer. Then two days afterwards, their devoted steward, M. Le Noir de St. Claude, who for fourteen years had lived in the courtyard of Port Royal des Champs, and had zealously watched over the interests of the community, was arrested and thrown into the Bastille. He had committed no real or alleged offence against the law, except it were such to manage the property of a few helpless women, who, by their age and sex, no less than by their profession, were incapacitated from managing it themselves. It is pleasant to know that he at least survived his persecutor. After eight years' detention in the Bastille, he was released at the death of Louis, and lived till 1742, the last of the company known as Messieurs de Port Royal.*

These proceedings were too slow for the King's impatience. He rebuked the Cardinal almost angrily. "If the Bishop of Chartres had had the affair of Port Royal in

* Dernière Persécution, vol. i. p. 161, *et seq.* Guilbert, vol. iv. *passim.*

his hands, he would have finished it in a fortnight." M. de Noailles thought it very hard to be thus reproached; for he had been expressly warned not to commit himself like M. de Perefixe by the use of harsh means, and yet was expected to accomplish what M. de Perefixe had failed to effect. No course was open except a resort to Rome. A bull would at once set aside the troublesome appeal to Lyons, and arm the Archbishop with plenary power. The necessary negotiations were therefore set on foot, and Clement XI. issued on the 27th of March, 1708, a bull commanding the union of the two monasteries, but providing that the sisters of Port Royal des Champs should remain in peaceable possession of their house, and that each should receive from the conventual funds a pension of 200 livres. But this was not what Louis wanted; "If he were to wait," he said, "till the last lay sister died, he might not have the pleasure of seeing in his lifetime the final extinction of Port Royal." So a new bull, expressly issued in deference to the wishes of "the Most Christian King, who had cleansed his kingdom of all heresies, old and new," was received in October, enforced by royal letters patent on the 9th of December, and registered by the Parliament of Paris on the 19th of the same month. This time there could be no mistake as to the terms. Port Royal is a "nest of error;" Jansenism is roundly qualified as "heresy." The monastery was to be for ever suppressed; its church secularised; its property and archives transferred to the house in Paris; its nuns dispersed into different convents. The bull was antedated on the same day as its milder predecessor.*

The cause of Port Royal had long been hopeless; had it not been so, the last gleam of hope would have faded

* Guilbert, vol. v. pp. 85—318. Dernière Persécution, vol. ii. pp. 11—81.

away at the death of Père La Chaise, which took place on the 20th of January, 1709. He had attained the age of eighty-five, and had held the office of royal confessor for more than thirty-three years. It is not to the annals of Port Royal that we must look for his real character; he was a Jesuit, and there needed no other reason why he should regard the focus of Jansenist doctrine with suspicion and dislike. Under the reign of his successor, men began to find out that La Chaise was honourable, courteous, kind, moderate; that he used the opportunities of his high office for the discouragement of backbiting; and that he distributed, wisely and fairly, the patronage of the Church. St. Simon, as well as the other memoir writers, draws a fearful picture of Le Tellier, who, after the interval of a month, was appointed to the vacant office. He was a Jesuit of the narrowest, hardest, most fanatical type; whose whole soul was bound up in the triumph of the society. He never turned aside for a single hour from the pursuit of his objects. He despised intrigue when he could use force; and went straight to his mark, heedless of what he trampled upon by the way. And yet, when need was, he could be profoundly false; and laughed at his promises when it was no longer his interest to keep them. He rejoiced in "iron health, and an iron heart;" had neither relations nor friends; and was feared, if not hated by his comrades of the society. It illustrates all his character, that he began his intercourse with Louis by boasting, with proud humility, of the meanness of his origin,—the Norman peasant setting his foot upon the pride of the long descended King. For us, he has no interest, except in so far as he may have inspired the cruelties which ended the last persecution of Port Royal; but throughout the six years during which Louis still lived, the Church of France had terrible reason to regret that

his conscience was guided by a fierce and ignorant fanatic.*

But before the Bull could be carried into execution, there were still legal forms to be gone through, which afforded the nuns a brief respite, and the opportunity of fresh memorials and appeals. The Archbishop issued a commission "*de commodo et incommodo;*" a formal inquiry, that is, as to the propriety of uniting the two houses. The commissioner visited Port Royal des Champs on the 13th of April, and summoned the neighbouring curés and farmers to give evidence. Their testimony was a chorus of praise of Port Royal, and of sympathy with its sufferings. One honest farmer said 'that he did not understand what they meant by *commodo* and *incommodo*; all he knew was, that the kindness of the nuns was beyond all expression; that he had often experienced it in his needs. They were the same to everybody, and no where was there anything but a good word for them.' So even Cardinal de Noailles himself was more than once compelled to confess, that the monastery which he was about to destroy, was guilty of no worse crime than obstinate disobedience. Public opinion in Paris cried shame; alms were secretly conveyed to the now poverty stricken community; disguised priests, it is said, administered the sacraments in spite of the Archbishop. Madlle. de Joncoux, a Jansenist lady, who is active in these latter days, and seems to have had a rare faculty of access to great people, and of saying to them what she pleased, has left a singular record of more than one interview with De Noailles. The following passage, which is characteristic of both interlocutors, expresses the general Jansenist feeling.† She is writing to the Prioress; "I told him afterwards, that persons who did not at all understand the doctrinal question, were indignant to see you reduced to

* St. Simon, vol. xii. chap. ccxvii. † Guilbert, vol. v. p. 417.

live on alms, while your property is abandoned to nuns who have squandered their own; that this was a crying shame. 'I know well,' he answered, 'that they want for nothing, and if they did, I would give it them myself, for I do not wish that they should be in need, and I will provide for their wants, when it is necessary.' 'But why,' I answered, 'do they want for nothing? Because such as I would rather sell our petticoats, than let them want for anything; for I am sure that I would rather sell mine than see them in want.' 'Truly,' he said laughingly, 'I know that you would rather sell your petticoat; but, *mon Dieu*, you will get yourself into trouble.' 'It is a long time,' I answered, 'since I was afraid of that; if one only has a coif, one need not be very anxious, and I would not change it for a cardinal's hat.' With that I made him a profound curtsey, and went away. I received yesterday fifty livres for you from Madame Geoffroi, widow of the apothecary; she desires to have a share in the prayers of the house."

The Archbishop's decree for the total suppression of Port Royal des Champs was issued on the 11th of July, and was confirmed by the Parliament of Paris on the 3rd of August. On the 1st of October, Madame de Château Renaud, Abbess of Port Royal de Paris, accompanied by legal witnesses, went to take possession of her new kingdom. The Prioress, who received her courteously, did not summon the community to meet her, and altogether refused to acknowledge her jurisdiction. The only act of overt resistance was that of a servant, who, unwilling to hear the bell announce with joyous peal the advent of the new Abbess, cut the rope. Madame de Château Renaud drew off her forces, made a *procès verbal* of her ineffectual visit, and went the same night to St. Cyr to report progress to Madame de Maintenon. The next step was an order in council, requiring the nuns to acknowledge the Abbess of Port Royal de Paris as their lawful head. Then pre-

parations were made to execute the bull and the Archbishop's decree by force.*

The rest of my tale is soon told. M. d'Argenson, the lieutenant of police, assembled, on the 28th of October, a company of gensd'armes and archers, in number about 300, and, with twelve carriages, a litter, and several women to attend upon the nuns, set out for Port Royal. The little army passed the night in the surrounding villages; some, it is said, bivouacked in the woods, where they lighted great fires. The twenty-two sisters, the garrison whom this host had come to summon, passed the night in ignorance of the approaching danger; though afterwards they recollected that the dormitory lamps had suddenly gone out, a fact without precedent, and ominous of coming ill. About half-past seven, on the morning of the 29th, as the nuns were coming out of the choir, where they had heard mass, M. d'Argenson's arrival was announced. He at once, firmly, but without any show of violence, took possession of the house, asked for all the keys, and secured the deeds and other papers which lay in the archives. Then, as the bell sounded for tierce, he permitted the sisterhood once more to join together for worship in the church. The psalm of the day was the twenty-fifth, "Unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul," which, with the "Veni Creator," formed the principal part of the brief service. The public worship of Port Royal could not more fitly end than with so sublime an expression of confidence in God, so earnest a prayer for the gift of the Spirit.

The whole community, including the lay sisters, were then summoned to meet in chapter. One, Euphrasie Robert, eighty-six years of age, and long unable to walk, six of her sisters — singing meanwhile the burial psalm, "When Israel went out of Egypt" — bore, on a mattress,

* Guilbert, vol. v. p. 424, *et seq.*; vol. vi. pp. 1—41. Dernière Persécution, vol. ii. pp. 86—233.

into the chapter house. Then M. d'Argenson announced to them that he was charged with a *lettre-de-cachet* for each; that each was to be forthwith conveyed to some distant monastery; that in three hours they must depart; and that now it only remained for the Prioress to choose among the specified convents her own place of exile. The news was courteously told, and quietly heard; the Prioress answered for all, that half an hour, to say good-bye, and to take a Bible, a breviary, and the rule of the house, was all they needed. The little bundles of clothes were soon ready, the carriages were ordered into the court-yard, and, early in the afternoon, the nuns prepared to leave for ever a home which to all of them was inexpressibly venerable and dear. Of the twenty-two, none were less than fifty, three were above eighty years of age; yet no two were to be suffered to remain together, lest each should encourage the other in obstinate heresy. Their destinations were various and wide apart: Rouen, Autun, Chartres, Amiens, Compiegne, Meaux, Nantes, Nevers; while five lay sisters, for whom a reception in distant convents had not yet been prepared, were to be sent temporarily to St. Denys. Then, two and two, they sadly and slowly moved away. The youngest lay sister — she who was supposed to hold the place of Charlotte de Roannez — had been a professed inmate of the house for nearly twenty-five years; the oldest had passed no fewer than sixty-three within its walls; and all had hoped to die, as they had lived, in peace together. Now, after brief good-bye, a firm word of benediction from the Prioress, and a moment's prayer before the accustomed altar, they parted to meet no more. Their trouble was not increased by any insult or harshness on the part of M. d'Argenson and his officers; while it may have been soothed by the tears and lamentations of the poor, who, since the days of La Mère Angélique, had blessed the name of Port

Royal, and now were not slow to testify their love and sorrow. Before night they were all on their way, except the poor paralytic, who, helpless and forgotten, still lay on the floor of the chapter house. Some of the servants, who for the night were permitted to remain, cared for her wants as they best could; and on the morrow she was sent in a litter to the place of her almost unconscious imprisonment. So fell Port Royal on the 29th of October, 1709, one hundred years and a few days after the Journée du Guichet, the epoch which decisively marked its reform.

M. d'Argenson, whose work was not yet quite done, remained at the monastery till the 31st. The servants were to be dismissed; the books and papers packed; seals to be placed upon the doors; and a *procès verbal* of the whole affair to be drawn up. Almost as soon as the nuns were gone, came a priest named Madot, supposed to be sent by Le Tellier, who ransacked the house, both now and on a subsequent visit, in the hope of discovering important papers. He was disappointed; all the archives, which were of any value, were already in D'Argenson's hands, who was not disposed to give them up to any ecclesiastical authorities. Then, leaving the deserted house in charge of an officer, the lieutenant of police hastened to Versailles to give an account of his work to the King. It was heard without compunction: "I am satisfied with their obedience; I am sorry that they are not satisfied with my religion." Meanwhile all Paris, except the Jesuits and their friends, was in a flame of honest indignation. The number of those who cared for "fait" and "droit" was not great; only a few even of these approved the obstinate resistance of the nuns: but that the lieutenant of police should go out with 300 archers against twenty-two helpless women, was a thing to make a man's cheek tingle, and to put bitterness upon his tongue. The Archbishop

was ignorant, or pretended to be ignorant, of what had been done; his friends gave it out that he had not consented to more than the carrying off of three or four nuns: and the Jansenists scornfully answered in the words of Cleophas*: "Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?" Nevertheless, it may well have been so; if Le Tellier felt himself sure of the King, he was not a man to take the Archbishop into his councils. Not many years afterwards, the thought of Port Royal must have been very bitter to the Archbishop, himself accused of Jansenism, and harassed by King and Jesuits, as he had harassed the decaying sisterhood. "What would you have?" once said to him, in those days, outspoken Madlle. de Joncoux; "God is just, my Lord, and these are the stones of Port Royal falling back upon your head." †

It is not necessary to follow, with the zealously minute annalists of Port Royal, each of the sisters to the place of her imprisonment, and to tell the tale of weakness and faithfulness. One, who touched upon her eighty-first year at the time of the dispersion, died ten days afterwards: having in that brief space, said her gaolers, become convinced of the sinfulness of her previous resistance, and signed the Formulary. But, in truth, the example was sooner or later followed by almost all the scattered sisterhood. Extreme old age rendered one or two quite incapable of judgment; and others, who were able, under vigorous chieftainship, to maintain the combined attitude of resistance, could not stand alone. The story of the pre-

* Luke xxiv. 18.

† The account in the text is drawn up from Guilbert's account of the dispersion, vol. vi. p. 66—140, and from some MS. Memoirs, quoted by St. Beuve, vol. v. p. 572. The reader will find another account in the Histoire de la Dernière Persécution, vol. ii. p. 250, *et seq.* Conf. St. Simon, vol. xiv. chap. ccli.

vious imprisonment was repeated on a larger scale; signatures for the sake of the sacraments followed by swift repentance and retractation; frequent changes in the place of exile; kind or harsh treatment in various degree; hopes of reunion raised only to be dashed to the ground,—make up a tale which stretches far into the eighteenth century. Two nuns alone suffered no shade of weakness to darken over their names: Louise de St^e^ Anastasie du Mesnil, the Prioress, and Sœur Marie Magdeleine de St^e^ Gertrude du Valois. The former survived till 1716; the latter till 1723. Both showed to the last a courage worthy of the best days of Port Royal; but while the Prioress bravely died without the sacraments, the Sœur du Valois had the happiness of being restored, by participation in them, to a visible communion with the Church. The last nun of Port Royal des Champs was the lay sister Agnès Forget, who died in the hospital at Amiens, in 1738, having reached her eighty-fourth year. The death of Louis XIV., and the milder or more careless rule of the Regent, which stilled for a time so many theological animosities, brought no relief to the imprisoned sisters of Port Royal, who, forgotten of men, had no resource but "to wait patiently for God." *

Madame de Château Renaud followed hard upon the steps of M. d'Argenson to take possession of the spoils. She found store of linen, wood, wax, provisions, which, with the relics which had belonged to the suppressed community, were carefully conveyed to Port Royal de Paris. But she remained in the valley only three weeks, long enough to discover that the great empty rooms and corridors were dull and lonely, and the country round about, savage and unhealthy. Perhaps, too, when she had at last obtained possession of her Naboth's vineyard,

* Guilbert, vols. vi. vii. *passim.* Dernière Persécution, vol, iii. books viii. ix.

a restless feeling of remorse might now and then cross her mind, and inspire into her the wish to enjoy her new wealth where she might be less constantly reminded of its former owners. Presently the buildings of Port Royal des Champs became the subject of strangely conflicting intrigue. The Archbishop wished to send Madame de Château Renaud and her nuns thither, that, by the sale of Port Royal de Paris, he might discharge some of their many debts. The Jesuits, who were the principal creditors, waited eagerly for the moment of sale, with the intention of converting the buildings into a seminary. But Madame de Château Renaud did not wish to go to Port Royal des Champs, nor the Archbishop to sell Port Royal de Paris to the Jesuits. Then Madlle. de Joncoux, or some other busy and subtle Jansenist, bethought herself of rousing the jealousy of the Seminary of St. Sulpice, which had unbounded influence with Madame de Maintenon, against the scheme of the Society, in the hope of preserving Port Royal from any desecrating occupation, and free for the reunion there, if that might ever be, of the old sisterhood. The scheme succeeded only too well; the plan of translating Port Royal de Paris was abandoned, and the Jesuits were compelled to give up the idea of a Parisian Seminary. But the King saw, as well as Madlle. de Joncoux, what hopes centred in the buildings of Port Royal, and, by a decree of the 22nd of January, 1710, ordered their demolition. The pretext was the indebtedness of the house to which they now belonged, and the expense of keeping them in repair. But, in truth, the enmity of Le Tellier and the King was not sated, so long as one stone lay upon another.

The work of destruction was begun in June of the same year. The edict expressly reserved the church, and a lodging for the chaplain who should be appointed to serve it. But in August a rumour gained credence that the

church might possibly share the fate of the other buildings; and the Marquis de Pomponne, the degenerate son of a father who himself lacked many of the sterner virtues of his race, presented a petition to the King, begging permission to remove the remains of such members of his family as could be identified, to Pomponne, that "his posterity might forget that these bodies had been interred in a place which had had the misfortune to displease his Majesty." The permission was granted, under the condition that the exhumation should be effected by night; and the hearts of Angélique and Antoine Arnauld — together with the bodies of Agnès and Angélique de St. Jean Arnauld, of D'Andilly and his son De Luzançi — were removed to the church of Palaiseau, where, however, they did not find a final resting-place till 1749. The remains of other members of the family, who had been buried in the convent cemetery, were necessarily left to the general fate. If hearts long dead and withered could ever stir for one moment with their wonted fire, surely those of Angélique and Antoine Arnauld must have glowed with noble shame at so mean a translation! *

Port Royal had been a place of burial for five hundred years; and its cemeteries were rich in sacred dust. But in the century which preceded its destruction it had become a holy land, a place where men, dying afar off, desired that their bones might moulder, amid the remains of those whom they believed to be God's servants and saints. We have watched, during many years, the arrival of these funeral processions; bearing now a proscribed confessor to lie among those whom he had loved and guided; now a friend, unknown to fame though not to affection; now a heart, still and cold in its little casket, that had once throbbed high for truth and goodness. Here lay, not only

* Guilbert, vol. vi. pp. 148—155, 257—297.

the long line of Abbesses, but Le Maître, De Sericourt, De Saçi, Hamon, Racine, Tillemont, Pontchâteau, De Sévigné, Du Fossé, and many more whose names it were tedious to recall. Here rested at last the unquiet heart of Anne Génévièvе de Bourbon; here, too, the heart of Singlin, from whom she had learned the secret of peace. And now the cruel order for a general exhumation was issued. In some cases a separate removal and reinterment were possible and permitted. The body of Tillemont was taken to St. André des Arcs; those of Le Maître, De Saçi, and Racine, to the church of St. Étienne du Mont at Paris, where Pascal already lay. But in the months of November and December 1711, the cemeteries and the church were abandoned to brutal workmen, made more brutal by drink and their wretched work. They left, as far as possible, no grave unopened. The half-mouldering bodies were dragged from their resting places with insult and mutilation. Some were a mere mass of corruption; others looked reproach from their graves, with countenances unchanged by years of burial. The very dogs fed upon the remains, and, beaten away by the charitable hands of passers by, returned greedily to the horrid meal. But it is impossible to follow the annalists of Port Royal into all the mournful and revolting details of this closing scene. Some of the bodies received careful and tender reinterment in the parish church of Magny: others were roughly carted to the cemetery of St. Lambert, and there hidden in one deep pit. When the later Port Royalists, half wild with shame and sorrow, find, in the tempest of disaster which broke over Louis XIV.'s aged head, a token of Divine vengeance, and count his griefs as retribution for their wrongs, we rightly reply that God is just, and that it is not for man to interpret the reasons and methods of His judgments. And still when we read of the exhumations of Port Royal, it is hard not to think of the

frantic mob, maddened by ages of tyranny, which broke into the proud mausoleum of St. Denys, and scattered to the winds the ashes of generations of kings.

The destruction of the church, which followed the events which I have described, was finally accomplished in 1713. But the foundations of Port Royal still remain, and are visited, not only by pious pilgrims, who believe that it was the abode of those who have a closer access to the ear of God than struggling, sinful men, but by many who are drawn thither only by a hearty admiration of noble talents nobly used, and a sincere respect for undeserved misfortune.*

The story of a hundred years is told: we have traced (if the reader have been faithful thus far) the fortunes of Port Royal, from their first grey dawn in the Abbacy of Angélique Arnauld, to their sad and ominous setting. If we compare the tale with the voluminous materials from which it has been compiled, it is brief enough; and yet the question may rise to some lips,—Was ever the history of any convent of Cistercian nuns, since first Robert built Citeaux, worth the telling? Why, in these days of swift scientific progress, and social problems which make imperious demand upon good men's energies, and hopes for civilisation which look forward to some brightly indefinite future, spend the strength and opportunity of years in the attempt to reproduce a phase of Christian life and thought, which seems to belong to the irrevocable past, and shows but few points of likeness to English life and thought to-day? I might be content with answering, that any portion of human history, so that the materials exist for

* Guilbert, vol. vi. p. 299; vol. vii. pp. 84—135.

telling it, and it be honestly and accurately told, must be worth the historian's and the reader's labour. For the race is one through all its generations: and men, though the circumstances which surround and mould them be infinitely various, always resemble more than they differ from one another. But this is especially true of Christian history. The same spiritual phenomena appear in every church, and often in the same sequence. The religious emotions, like the baser passions, are alike in all; and though their depth and strength vary from man to man, the variations are little accordant with those of intellectual belief, and follow another law. The saints are of no church, but of all. And, therefore, the history of any sincere manifestation of religious life, has its interest and value for all religious men who are able to rise to the conception of the one Catholic Church, the visible limits whereof are known only to God.

I have already said that, taken on its intellectual side alone, Port Royal halts midway between Protestant and Catholic sympathies. Its doctrine of the sacraments, its theory of the Christian life, its belief in ecclesiastical miracles, its attitude towards the Virgin and the Saints, are all Catholic. When we watch the inner life of the convent, or trace the subtle power of its confessors, or note the self-imposed mortifications of its solitaries, there is no doubt as to the region of Christendom in which we find ourselves. The very eagerness with which Jansenist controversialists, themselves sorely bested, turn round to deal a blow against Huguenot foes, betrays a secret consciousness that their position is ambiguous. Declaim as they will against Calvin, their doctrine of grace is separated only by an imperceptible boundary from Calvinism. Their voice is nobly raised against perversions of morality, which had received at least a silent sanction from the Church. They own a heterodox desire to place within reach of the laity, the

Bible and the Service-book in the vulgar tongue. They manifest a perilous spirit of innovation in the books and methods of their schools. They unconsciously commit the unpardonable sin of Protestantism, in choosing for themselves a form of Christian doctrine, which they defend even against the Church and its head. But as their rebellion was only half accomplished, their protest ineffectually made, the Catholic critic accuses them of disobedience, conceit, contentiousness; the Protestant is tempted to charge them with inconsequence, if not unfaithfulness. The one asks, Why stray so far from the path of orthodox doctrine, and ecclesiastical discipline? the other, Why not have manfully pressed on into a country of perfect freedom?

Thus, many peculiarities in the story of Port Royal are explained by the fact, that it narrates a Protestant quarrel fought out within the limits of the Church. It need hardly be repeated that the Protestantism of Port Royal was to the last unconscious; its culminating point was Pascal's dying rejection of the distinction between "fait" and "droit," which involved a degree of self-reliance in matters of belief from which even Arnauld drew back. The Jansenist doctors did not dream that they were taking up a position hostile to Catholic doctrine, or to the theory of ecclesiastical subordination symbolised in the papal office; they believed that they upheld the true belief of the Church against a temporary prevalence of Molinist heresy, and appealed from a Pontiff, whose ear was occupied by false and malicious advisers, to one fully acquainted with the truth. And so, to a Protestant judgment, the battle of controversy seems chiefly to rage about positions of secondary importance, and to be crowned by the decisive victory of neither host. The papal decisions have always in them an element of uncertainty, which gives the Jansenist, while professing unconditional submission, a pretext for virtual disobedience. The Peace of the Church is ambiguous; even

the bull *Vineam* is susceptible of a double interpretation. The subtleties, which on the vanquished side are the excuses for continuing the struggle, do not sound like the clear declarations of honest conviction. We grow weary of "fait," and "droit;" of a peace which is based upon no definite understanding, and a war which is but the rekindling of old ashes of contention. Even if we learn the price which, in the loss of theological honesty and clearness of speech, an infallible Church pays for apparent uniformity of doctrine and discipline, the lesson may be somewhat tedious and dull. But the virtues of Port Royal transcend the region, where a broad line of demarcation severs Protestant and Catholic, and transport the student into one, where it is allowed him to remember that, whatever his creed, he is no more and no less than a Christian. Arnauld's long service of the truth; the simple-hearted but constant courage of his sisters and their nuns; the practical religious wisdom of St. Cyran and of Singlin; De Saçi's daily walk with God; the all-sacrificing bravery of Le Maître and his companions in solitude; the kindly mysticism of Hamon; the self-consuming devotion of Pascal to all truth of thought and life; the modest conscientiousness of Tillemont's studies; the apostolic energy of Pavillon's labours, do not now remain to be characterised. My work is ill done if the reader have not learned to know and honour them. To watch how the richest "fruits of the Spirit" ripen in every corner of the fold cannot but lessen the gulfs of mistrust and dislike which yawn between Christian Churches; while the admiration of God's all-efficient energy should be the greatest in those who believe that such noble growths as these have sprung from an uncongenial soil, and been matured beneath a clouded sun.

It is now so well understood by thoughtful and candid men that the history of the Church is to be written with

the same impartiality which we look for in all other history, that I make no apology for not having placed by the side of my Catholic tale a margin of Protestant comment. The ecclesiastical historian is not indeed exempt from the duty of moral judgment; nor have I refrained from pointing out the dangers of auricular confession when it was necessary to speak of casuistry, or from characterising the essential error of monasticism when I had told the mournful story of Pascal's last years. But if a work like this is to be something better and more enduring than a party pamphlet, the historian must be able to see the facts which he narrates as they appear both from within and without the Church in which they manifest themselves. Few men may be qualified to write of a religious movement with which they have little intellectual sympathy; far fewer can speak honestly of one which engages their whole mind and heart. And the condition under which an impartial Church history is most likely to be produced is, that the writer should be able to put himself, by the force of moral fellow-feeling, in the place of those from whose intellectual conclusions he widely differs, yet whose character and action he endeavours to describe. It is not for me to judge how far I have succeeded in realising my own ideal. It is the inevitable penalty of my position that my Protestant readers will think me too Catholic, my Catholic ones not Catholic enough. I shall be content if both acquit me of indifference to truth and right, wherever they may reveal themselves amid the shifting scenes of my story.

M. Royer-Collard was accustomed to say, "that who knew not Port Royal, knew not humanity." I dare not adopt a phrase which, upon the title-page of my book, would become too proud a boast; yet I venture to hope that the portraits which I have drawn have a common character of feature and expression which may recommend

them to the student of the Christian life. For Jansenist holiness, like Jansenist doctrine, holds a middle place, and has its fine shades of difference, which distinguish it from purely Protestant or Catholic saintliness. And yet when I turn once more in thought to the minute and affectionate records, where for five years I have sought the spirit and the materials of my tale, even this expectation seems too bold. The outlines of my picture appear feeble and indistinct; its colours blurred and dull. It is enough to hope that, in this story of unswerving faithfulness to conviction, of unwearied aspiration after holiness, something may have been added to the annals of Christian achievement. For if it be true that human systems of theology are but "broken lights" of the Divine Mind, which is "more than they," we may also be permitted to dream that, while all individual holiness is necessarily maimed and incomplete, it is possible to construct from the saintliness of all the saints, the likeness of that perfect human life which is renewed in the image of God.

THE END.

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